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# 'I didn't notice Elizabeth May's sweater. I was busy listening to what she was saying.'

## PICK-A-PECK OF LEADERS

**THE SPECIAL** Campaign Edition (Sept. 28) with its three cover versions (Stephen Harper, Stephen Harper and Jack Layton) arrived in the mail yesterday and I wanted to thank you for the fine series of articles on the party leaders. I enjoy the time I spend reading your magazine. Various Internet sites are employed as the art of journalism, but I still like the comfort of reading, thinking and then writing a response. Kudos to all at Maclean's! *Patricia Brontgen Kiffer, Hamilton*

**WITH YOUR** Special Campaign Edition, I learned that Maclean's would give me what I've learned to expect—a fair and unbiased view that I'm unlikely to find anywhere else. Your article on Green Leader Elizabeth May disappeared me ("Make or break time for politics," National, Sept. 29). In your profile, I read that May was "wearing the same pale yellow sweater she wore in Guelph." I was aghast. I wasn't even aware Elizabeth May owned a sweater set, let alone a yellow one, because I'm paying way too much attention to what she has been trying to say. I don't remember the suits of any of the party leaders, and I don't expect the doctored photos. *Theresa Zyzanski, New Hamburg, Ont.*

**ALTHOUGH** I appreciated the latest edition of Maclean's and to their credit, such feature as a party leader, it became much more acceptable (some after) to be off and discarded the cover with the picture of the current anti-spirited Prime Minister. *Rae Barr, Inverness, Ont.*

**I RECEIVED** my Sept. 29 issue today and I was amazed that you have already written off Green Leader Elizabeth May and Blue Quebec Leader Gilles Duceppe by not giving them their own cover too. (Issues are often more powerful than the written word.) It seems that Maclean's considers May and Duceppe to be nobodies. *Gerry Green, Winnipeg*

## THE MEDIA SCOURGE

**I ALWAYS** READ Andrew Coyne's enthusiasm and thought I was disagreeing with your point of view, he is lining up with his story about how the media do more harm than good as the way they cover elections ("How journalism got in the way of the election," Opinion, Sept.

29). In elections, the media are peripheral parties writing around the candidates but never getting inside. They allowed us reporters explaining why the politicians were so wrong as what they did or said, or how they did or said it. There are many hard-working members of the media, but perhaps they should work harder to report the news without editorializing. It is a rare treat to read a story that is well-thought-out and well-written. *Glen Netman, Shanty Bay, Ont.*

**FM 25 AND ONLY** really started paying attention to politics during the last election



Since then, I have watched with great interest and even greater depression as I realize Andrew Coyne is absolutely correct: journalists get in the way of the election. I only want to hear about the parties and what they plan to do. Give me ideals, ideas, promises, objectives and their platforms for governing Canada. If journalists were to focus on these important things then we would have a much more accountable government because the people would know who stands for what and what was promised by whom. That way we would have less chance of putting someone in power and later wondering, "How did he ever get elected?" *Eric Jordan, Waterloo, Ont.*

## DANCING ALONE

**AS ONE** of the women among those who might decide the election, I don't know whether to be more put off by the seemingly low level

chelon I have or your cover ("Who women vote," How I can't find her groove, and Don't let her dance," Cover, Sept. 22). I can't speak for other women, but this one is not looking for a dance partner. I suspect I'm not alone in comprehending that appearances and slick marketing campaigns are part of it. I should note that I'm the only one frustrated by excessive attention to the candidates' warm and fuzzy performance in photo ops. I vote for more focus on the issues, the environment, domestic and foreign policy, poverty, the track record on the arts, health care, education and all the rest of the real issues. *Alydia Grace Philpotts, St. Mary's, B.C.*

## ROAD WARRIORS

**I AGREED** with the experts Barbara Bagnato interviewed in her story when they say that compact cars may not be as green as bigger ones because they don't last as long ("The small car conundrum," Business, Sept. 22). My mid-2000 Pontiac Vibe has been around for more than 20 years. My 1989 Chevrolet Caprice survived a hailstorm last June without a scratch, while the Hyundai Elantra parked beside it suffered \$12,000 and \$5,300 in damage. When you get such a return every three years, what's the sensible solution? It may add the \$5,000 plus car rental expenses plus car insurance company administration costs to my insurance bill. This represents energy, wasted materials, pollution and a consuming population growth that generates greenhouse gases and so on. The earth could do without all that for the next few years. Perhaps it's time for a nuclear war option on all cars to save the environment. *Nick Hall, Richmond Hill, Ont.*

**I THINK THERE** is a reason the Big Three are losing money when a company like Honda is selling more cars than ever. Not only are Honda cars fuel-efficient, they are of better quality. Every Honda model made the Consumer Reports recommendation list for this year. Every model. I think if GM and other car companies want to attract mass buyers, they need to up the quality of their vehicles, not just the fuel efficiency. To tell people to buy bigger cars is irresponsible. Telling them to buy better quality cars will certainly be better for everyone. *Eric McIlwain, Moncton, N.B.*

## REAL LIFE AND DOCTORS

**I READ WITH INTEREST** your feature on Canada's Best Professional Schools, specifically the story about studying science and getting into medical school ("So, you want to be a doctor?" Universities, Sept. 22). As a professional engineer and a medical doctor, I would like to emphasize the fact that, like science, applied science (i.e., engineering) provides potential medical school applicants with the fundamental education necessary to excel well on the Medical College Admission Test. But looking beyond the mastery of the MCAT exam, unlike science, studying engineering provides students with an extremely valuable foundation in applying scientific principles to solve real-life problems—a skill that will serve them well throughout their careers in medicine. Yes, planning ahead and taking the necessary prerequisites for a solid foundation in math and science are essential, but I would like to encourage young people to consider engineering as an equally valid source of undergraduate study leading to medical school, just as many of us engineers have succeeded in becoming physicians. *Dr. Kiana Karkh, Director, Biomedical Engineering Program, Faculty of Applied Science, University of British Columbia, Vancouver*



**MOST VOLUNTEERS** I've met abroad aren't just there for a paid or unpaid cause," writes a reader

## ANY VOLUNTEERS?

**I WAS DISAPPOINTED** with Rachel Mandel's article about young Canadians volunteering abroad ("Helping the world achieve," Society, Sept. 20). I was hired by Journalism for Human Rights (JHR) to work in Namibia in 2006. I went to Namibia at the same time that I wrote a column, mentioned in your article, travelled to Tanzania, and we both trained

together. I think Mandel's article on JHR has been overlooked and her bad experience has been used to question programs that thousands of other Canadians successfully complete. During my time with JHR, I witnessed an incredible transformation of the media in South Africa, especially where JHR has made a large presence. During negotiations over the election campaign last year, local

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# 'European fire ants might soon present your biased article to a sympathetic "rights" tribunal'

human rights coverage doubled because of the efforts of a small group of us who daily worked in local newspapers with local journalists. We saw human rights issues become front and center in most of the Frontiers magazines made.

Canadians have good news internationally because we have a history of programs

that placed second people in all parts of the world, and they do good work. Of course every nation isn't traveling halfway around the world for dramatic reasons (and why should they?) but the majority of volunteers I've met abroad aren't just there for a good deed reward. If you ask me, that wouldn't be very Canadian.

Dorey Greenough, Communications and Public Relations Officer, Right to Education Campaign Coordinator, University of British Columbia, Vancouver

## A MATTER OF PRINCIPALS

DOES ANYONE actually believe that paying school principals *money* will improve the quality of Canadian schools ("Are Canada's principals underpaid?" National, Sept. 22)? The only basis for such a claim seems to be that the U.S. pays them more, but that's because they have incentives to run schools and not education. And, not wholly accidentally, they have one of the poorest education systems of the developed world. If we really want to improve Canadian schools, we should eliminate school boards and the language of trustees, consultants, directors, deputy directors and superintendents, anyone who has virtually no contact with students. We should also dramatically reduce all the policy and curriculum theories constantly spewing out of provincial ministries of education and subsequently reduce the size of the ministries. We could then take the copious amount of money saved as a result of the above two measures and actually invest it in our classrooms. There will also likely still be surplus money that can be used to increase the pay for principals and teachers alike, both of whom are underpaid and underappreciated in this country.

Michael Ernest Sauer, Montreal

## STINGING CRITICISMS

YOUR ARTICLE on European fire ants was completely out of touch with current Canadian values ("Red, red wine," Nature, Sept. 22). These are clearly new Canadians trying their best to blend in with a new and different culture. It is only a matter of time before they form their own subgroup and present your clearly biased article to a sympathetic "rights" tribunal. Haven't you people learned anything from your recent experiences?

Bob Appel, Montreal, Ont.

AS A FORMER biologist, I used to get asked if any boss ever bit me. I would answer by saying that, no matter how hard I tried, I could stick my hand into a hive, and out one would have me—though quite a few did sting me. Your writer should be made aware that some insects bite, and some insects sting. Fire ants bite.

Marc Perley, Montreal, France

IT'S IMPORTANT TO NOTE that European fire ants do not pose a serious threat to people and that they are only found in some areas of Richmond Hill. Residents are encouraged to continue to enjoy our parks and green spaces and are advised to stay on the pathways in areas where there are known populations of these ants. The Town of Richmond Hill has developed a management plan to help maintain the spread of this invasive species to other natural areas and promote public and staff awareness. It is our hope that a non-chemical solution will be found to address the growing populations of European fire ants while supporting a

Audrey Holbrook, Director of Public Development and Design, Town of Richmond Hill, Ont.

## Line item

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LAST WEEK ORDERS ON LIST

## IN PASSING

Paul Newman, 53, actor. He epitomized cool, strong to stardom in the theatre and film versions of *Seven Days in May*. Newman also starred in *Mad, Cool Hand Luke*, *Raiders* and *Smith Goes to Washington*. In recent years he appeared in *Road to Perdition* and provided one of the voices to the animated feature *Cars*. As a philanthropist Newman raised more than US\$100 million for charities through personally branded consumer products such as his salad dressings and popcorn.

Ralph Socia, 86, football coach. Long associated with the Hamilton Tiger-Cats as player, coach, general manager and superintendent, he had coached the team to three Grey Cup Championships between 1963 and 1967 and later served as team president for the Toronto Argonauts in the 1990s.

This is how it should feel.

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**THERE'S A POINT TO THIS.  
IT MAY TAKE FOUR YEARS TO FIND IT,  
BUT THERE'S A POINT.**

At one time or another in your life, you have owned a car that disappointed you. From the big, to the small, there had to be something that got in the way of you being entirely satisfied.

Maybe it was the clicking sound beneath the dash that haunted your dreams. A windshield that always cracked in the same place. Fluids that leaked and leaked your garage floor into some depressed kid's potato painting. Stereo that only picked up new age experimental jazz stations. Brakes like a dog whistle—that only hums hear.

The engine that died on the way to the interview for a job you never would've gotten anyway (or so you told yourself in retirement). The cup holder that, one day, decided not to come out and greet you in the morning.

An conditioner that buzzed, angry that you had brought it out of hibernation. Hissers that chirped (a Nutcracker, your Uncle Barry knowingly pointed out). Transmissions that slipped and left you in second. Backseats that never got you just right.

Rain that compromised the seat in your window, running your new calculator wacky. The spate that

was first. Foggy windows on dry days. A brake light that only worked when you hit the gas.

Rust.

It's an exhaustive list, we know, and by no means complete. But you get the point.

We all know the cliché: Life is far too short to be unhappy. It is something not lost on all of us at Nissan. After all, we're drivers too. So when we set out to create the new Altima we decided to shake things up, do things differently.

We call it *Sakitsuyaka*, or *Sak*. *Laasoch* (you'll probably find the latter easier to pronounce, and far less embarrassing at dinner parties. That is, if you talk about ads at dinner parties.)

*Sak* *Laasoch* is the process with which we made the new Altima, a process that involves 4 years (that didn't take too long, did it?) of constant testing from the very minute the pen hits the drafting table, to the second it's driven off the lot.

First, we use common sense. Everybody talks to each other from the designers, to the engineers, manufacturing, right down to the showroom floor, everyone collaborates. The way for example a fire,

unforeseen by the people who want to make it look pretty, is addressed by those who want to turn your knuckles white every time you hit the gas. And vice versa. By the way, we sell those too.

Next, come the checks. Hundreds of them. Throughout the production of each Altima, body shop, paint shop, hard top, and soft top, all will be checked, and re-checked to see that what they are doing is up to code.

And then there are the tests. Thousands, all told. And we're not talking about multiple choice, or essays where you just make stuff up. No cramming the night before here.

Yes, real tests that require us to actually drive every single Altima that comes off the end of the production line.

Impressive. Yet, so are the Quality Specialists who perform them. They're called *Squirk & Rattle Experts*—nothing to do with mice and snakes. A *Squirk & Rattle Expert*, there are 70 of them at the plant, will drive each toothily-minded Altima for more than 7 minutes as soon as it comes off the line. And drive it hard.

To see if there are wind noise and suspension noises, there are two 112 km/h straightaway tests. There's a 14 km/h torsional road test that looks for squeaks and rattles, hence the name, from the suspension or body. A specially-designed course ensures acceleration and handling are up to per-

Also, a patch and concrete road that simulates the effects of up to 600,000 potholes.

Why all the tough stuff, you ask?

Well, ultimately, if any Altima has the slightest abnormality, the *Squirk & Rattle Expert* is only too happy to *squirk & rattle*.

Let's be honest here. There will be Altimas that don't make the cut.

When all is said, and done, you have yourself a car so thoroughly tested, you'd think it'd have an anxiety attack every time it passes a school bus. Get used to it. Given the power under the hood, you'll be doing plenty of passing.

Every Altima is a car unlikely to annoy. No more mysterious thump when you pass a fire hydrant. Paint that chips if you look at it wrong. A trunk that only closes when you kick the bumper.

It takes 4 years to get here, but, ultimately, it's highly unlikely you will ever be disappointed with your Altima.

That is, unless, of course, you're a sucker for punishment. You secretly enjoy being disappointed every time you get behind the wheel. In that case, there are plenty of other cars out there that will, well, keep you satisfied. **THE 2003 NISSAN ALTIMA.**









## A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF HEATHER MALICK

Last week, the CBC was defecating its online columnist over a piece about U.S. VP candidate Sarah Palin in which Mallick said Palin appeals to the "white trash vote" and sports a "toned down version of the poor actress look." Mallick was criticized by U.S. and Canadian news outlets, and even labelled a "pig" by one Fox News commentator. On Monday, after receiving 306 complaints, the CBC deleted and removed the column, calling it "grossly hyperbolic and intensely partisan."

### Good news

#### Not just hijinks

Granted, Canada's first-ever convicted terrorist is no Osama bin Laden. He was a naive manager who went camping with the wrong crowd and stole a few wallet knives in the name of jihad. But his guilty verdict—the first in the so-called "Toronto 18" plot—was the correct decision. Despite what the conspiracy theorists say, this case has nothing to do with post-9/11 Islamophobia or emotional copy writing to inflame their budgets. As the judge declared, there was "overwhelming evidence" that his group, Muslim extremists were plotting an attack on Canadian soil. No, the 47-year-old was not one of the leaders, but he knew full well that he and his cohorts "were training for a serious purpose."

#### Better late...

Ethel Glenney delivered a wide appeal to Israel's behalf this week, saying the country's future depends on a peace deal with the Palestinians, and that the price will be an almost complete withdrawal from the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Rebuffing Canadian, but not her own, faith club's advice, Glenney had such plain old children's advice as "be nice" forced out of the prime minister's chair. Maybe it's time for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to deliver a similarly blunt message to his hard liners, too.

#### Freer expression

A.U.K. publisher has mailed in its planned October launch of a novel about the Prophet Muhammad's child bride, despite the flaming of its office. Gibson Square had already once again agreed to print Sherry Jones's *The Jewel of Medina* after Random House in the U.S. dropped the book over fears it could provoke radical Muslims. And

another brave to Canada's Supreme Court for agreeing to examine an Ontario ruling that severely limited the ability of reporters to shield confidential sources from police scrutiny. Cops and prosecution have more access and resources than any media organization. Freedom of the press is too important a principle to be sacrificed for investigative expediency.

#### Pray it away

British scientists have confirmed what God-fearing humans have

### FACE OF THE WEEK



**PAID RCMP INFORMANT** Hudaib: Shabbat speaks for the week's following the conviction of the first member of the "Toronto 18"

known for extreme faith beliefs. According to researchers at Oxford University, a firm belief in God actually increases people's capacity to reduce physical pain. The scientists interviewed 22 Catholics and 12 atheists in a series of electric shocks—"torments," as they described it—while each participant held a picture of the Virgin Mary. The Catholics, they found, were able to block out much of the agony by focusing on their faith. No word yet on whether the same therapy applies to pain caused by plunging stocks.

### Bad news

#### Who invited them?

They're at it again. Last week, we questioned the lack of vetting of political candidates by the parties in Canada's federal election. This week, welcome to a whole new batch of bad apples. A Conservative candidate who suggested in an interview that immigrants were more likely to commit crimes than native-born Canadians, a Liberal candidate who wrote in 2003 that Israeli intelligence officials knew in advance about 9/11 and that Israeli businessmen had warned the towers

a former dental technician and the leader of the Freedom party, has been linked to neo-Nazi extremists and Holocaust deniers. Among his party's mandates is the creation of a government ministry devoted to deporting undesirable immigrants. While support for these parties was not strong enough to win either seat the election (the Social Democrats took it by a narrow margin), it's still strong enough to terrify many an advertiser.

#### Don't bet on it

John McCain came under fire this week for his close relationship with industry lobbyists and for his penchant for high-stakes poker. It was McCain's card playing past, of course, that helped derail his 2008 presidential bid, and the Republican base is more than happy about the latest revelations. If he loses yet again, McCain may want to consider retiring for office in Canada—a country full of fellow gamblers. According to the latest figures from StatsCan, Canadians lost a combined \$15.6 billion on lotteries, casinos, slot machines and VLTs in 2007, a fivefold boost from 15 years ago.

#### Not so sweet

British candy giant Cadbury has recalled 11 types of chocolate from Southeast Asian markets because the Bering made trace amounts of melamine, the industrial chemical that has poisoned the Chinese milk supply, poisoning thousands of children. Bitts and Mars have also recalled some of their Chinese-made products over melting fears—although melamine poisons are damaging the results of evidence seen done by the Indonesian government. Maybe this Halloween it would be safer to let the kids play the trick. Sco. ■

JOHN W. MCCAIN/REUTERS; J.P. MCCAIN/REUTERS



It only makes sense that the place known for getting you the job is a great place to have a job.



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# MITCHEL RAPHAEL ON MISPLACED POTSHOTS AND THE DOG WHO'S CAMPAIGNING FOR THE TORIES

## THE RETURN OF KIM CAMPBELL

Former Progressive Conservative PM Kim Campbell recently went door-knocking with Tory candidate Lorne Maynecourt, who is running against Liberal Hedy Fry in Vancouver. Campbell lost her seat to Fry in 1995. Maynecourt was a Liberal MLA who resigned his seat to run. He is the Tories' only remaining openly gay candidate. So how did you Maynecourt by the ugly door in his campaign office (located in what was an old "assault" pharmacy) that he entered in with excitement and disapproval. He also added a Zen feel to the office with a plant of a man he has collected representing people he knows who have died, many from AIDS. Still on the office front, MP James Moore, who once of Stephen Harper's top lieutenants in British Columbia, has his campaign office in a former Christian bookstore. Moore's dog, Jed, named after Ted Kater, the U.S. president on The West Wing, is on the campaign trail too. He wears a Conservative logo doggy jacket, which Moore admits rare to remove before the big poach does his business.

## CAN SOMEONE PLEASE LEAD JOHN GOURBAY A HALLET

Toronto MP Carolyn Bennett held a fundraiser in her riding at the Japanese restaurant Edo. It was attended by high profile conservative socialites PM John Harper and her most recent riding visitor, freshly retired MP John Godfrey, the new headmaster at the Toronto French School. Godfrey told Capital Diary he recently dressed up like the headmaster versus Dan Hildebrand at Harry Potter spoof at the school. Meanwhile on the new house



PRIME MINISTER HARPER (top left) with Lorne Maynecourt (left) and James Moore, Carolyn Bennett (top right), Hedy Fry with Joan de (bottom), Joyce Wray (bottom left), Martha Hall Findlay (bottom right), inset: (left) Moore's dog, Jed, and, DOMINIC LEBLANC

front, Godfrey's wife, Beth Bergard, noted the end-of-the-world need to help putting up their fallen banner sign because their mother is still packed in a box.

## MARTHA HALL FINDLAY AND THE PROM

Late March's Liberal by-election victory Martha Hall Findlay and Joyce Wray joined Ross,

ministering together in Marry's Vancouver. Quoting riding-Murray's subdued approach, meeting nicely with Hall Findlay's high energy mood and your style. Hall Findlay says she used to be a member of a well-known. "The only way I got to go to the high school prom was to tell teachers." Later they joined Stephenie Dine and other Liberals at the University of British Columbia and

were warmly greeted by students, except when New Brunswick MP Dominic LeBlanc and the Liberal leader joked about NDP candidates and got smirking, which perhaps, UBC Students? Talk about not knowing your audience.

## HEDY FRY AS A NUN?

Liberal MP Hedy Fry's campaigning included attending Bingo for Life, an AIDS fundraiser at the Vancouver gay bar the Masque. Incidentally the heart of her riding. Prizes included an outfit, DVD's, and Barack Obama underwear. "Next week we'll have a Hedy Fry bikini," joked drag queen host Joan-E. Fry is popular among the drag queens and transsexual community. The MP believes that medically diagnosed transsexuals should have their drugs covered under the Liberals' catastrophe-drugs plan. Fry had no luck at bingo, which didn't surprise her. "I have never won a bingo game in my life," says Fry, who knows the game well. During her youth in Trinidad, Fry was a volunteer in a convent (she once considered becoming a nun) and notes "We were Catholic—bingo is how we raised funds."

## THREE MOPS LOSE PARENTS

In a strange and sad set of coincidences, three parliamentarians have lost parents since the election was called. They MP Rick Dykstra lost his father, and Finance Minister Jim Flaherty and NDP MP Paul Dewar both lost their mothers. Dewar's mother was Marion Dewar, a former Ottawa mayor. ■

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# This isn't a culture war, it's a good old class war



ANDREW COYNE

When Stephen Harper launched his now celebrated broadcast at the cultural industrial complex ("all sorts of people at a rich gala all subsidised by the taxpayer, claiming their subsidies aren't high enough"), the response was as predictable as it was coherent. In some corners, the argument for subsidy is couched in a baffly insistence that art is not a business like any other. But this Canada, where rent-seeking is both our highest art and our most profitable business, so here artists have learned to protest that, in fact, they are a business, and should be subsidised like any other.

I don't propose to rebuke the whole argument here (interested readers will find the subject explored at gurning length at [andrewcoyne.com/voays/qa/art\\_arts\\_arts\\_how](http://andrewcoyne.com/voays/qa/art_arts_arts_how)). Suffice it to say there is a difference between support of the arts and class support of the arts, and that the separation of art and class would be as much to the benefit of art as anything else ("show art," said Degas, "we must discourage the arts").

What was more interesting was the polite class response. The instant analysis from all corners of the political class was that Harper was playing "wedge politics," using a largely symbolic issue—the \$45 million in funding cuts that precipitated the fracas as a tiny fraction of the Heritage Department's budget—as a means of splitting off one group of voters from another. This is commonly agreed to be a belated crime, especially as practically Conservative politicians. The possibility that those on the other side of the issue—the leftists quickly announced an increase of \$130 million in arts funding in response—might be doing the same thing does not seem to have occurred to anyone.

But of course they do. Just as Harper was speaking to his base ("ordinary working people" who "come home, turn on the TV"

and see all these "rich gals" they paid for), so the Liberals were appealing to theirs (the people who receive the subsidies, and those who identify with them). Harper may have been tapping into the resentment his people feel for these people, but not around \$600,000 was doing exactly the same. Back in his own way, was offering to protect his from theirs. In a word, it was about class class envy, class snobbery, call it what you will, but that's what it was.

We aren't accustomed to thinking of Canadian politics in terms of class, or not outside the confines of the NDP. We're more used to bawling it down by region, or language, or ethnicity. But it's there, lurking just below the surface, and Harper's Conservative have shown unusual skill in finding its fault lines. Only it isn't class in the old sense, as defined by income or percentage—or vulgar Marxism of the world's worst—the means of production. In our time it is defined by education, and profession, and

are anxious not to be thought vulgar, but more anxious still not to be thought lower class. It isn't class of the sort that causes them to be known as "the market"—of firms. In many ways, the Conservatives are marking the same territory as the Republicans in this regard: less secure money than NASCAR deals, or their Canadian equivalents. Only, in this country they are wooded less with cultural offerings than consumers. Read these Conservative badgers: it jumps out at you. The tax credit for children's books. The special reconstruction funders. Coded messages, more symbolic than substantive, that say "we're on your side." It's pandering, of course, but of a particular kind. The Liberals have historically sliced up the electorate, as it were, vertically along the traditional lines of region and race. They pandered vertically. The Tories pander horizontally by class.

As so worst, Tory/Republican class politics appeals to an ugly 19th-century instinct, a contempt for expertise, as in the Prime Minister's



**It's the culturati, not their Harperite foes, who have made the arts cuts a 'wedge issue'**

by the cultural elites that flow out of these. The media see Harper talking about subsidised whiners or ivory towers and scream "culture war." But it isn't culture war. It's class war. It's not about right and left. It's about lower and upper.

Like out of elbow aristocrats, the benefits of today are not necessarily to be found in the upper reaches of the income scale. That's indeed the point. As lawyers, academics, civil servants, journalists and the like—synthetic analysis, as Robert Reich's phrase—they operate at a higher status than mere consumers (though it has never stopped them from taking payment for their words). That is what makes the issue of arts subsidies so interesting as a class trigger. It is the culturati, not their Harperite antagonists, who have made this a wedge issue. Over the years, as a test of class loyalty. The perceiving middle-brow they have herded into the subsidy trap

airy dismissal of economists who disagree with his GST cuts, or statisticians who despair at his approach to income. But Liberal/Democratic class politics has no overt agendas, an almost unconscious score, best expressed by the famous story of the Manhattan 1920s's latter bewilderment at Richard Storer's election. "Nobody I know voted for him." It is a classic maddening far believing itself rooted in merit. The educated look down upon the uneducated, the cultured on the uncultural, without even that guttural reflex benevolence that marked the advocate of class.

I've heard it said that Barack Obama's Harvard Law, Class of '01, can't be class because of his humble origins. This misses the point. Class in our time is not about where you're from, but where you've been. ■

**ON THE WEB:** For more Andrew Coyne, visit his blog at [www.andrewcoyne.ca](http://www.andrewcoyne.ca)

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# Foreign policy? What foreign policy?



PAUL WELLS

In June 2006 in Quebec City, Peter MacKay told reporters he had asked the German Foreign Ministry to arrest the Iranian journalist who criticized Iranian Canadian photographer Zohreh Karami's death. "We're putting Iran on notice," MacKay said. He was speaking in Quebec City when he said it. It looked lovely. Strong guy.

What was less clear was what, precisely, Iran was on notice of. The Germans didn't manage to nab the Iranian bad guy in separate interviews I talked water acket to MacKay and to Prime Minister Stephen Harper where he would have been stood, and under which law, if he had been caught. Both men giggled. Nobody had ever had any idea. The goal was not to be tough—to impose a cost on the Iranian for brutality against a Canadian citizen. The goal was to look tough. Canada must be forever grateful to the Germans for feeling to intercept the Iranian prosecutor, for if they had caught him we would all have looked like fools for the foolishness of a nuclear government.

I remembered the political staffer's college-age giggling this week when it was revealed that the most important speech Harper delivered in Parliament before the Iraq war, in which he urged John Chretien to join George W. Bush's coalition of the willing, was subsequently lifted from a speech John Howard had delivered to the Australian parliament in Canberra 30 hours earlier.

Shortly after Harper was elected, reporters were berated for not covering his opening announcement for Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan. The document read—Liberal? Stuckey journalists—no, soldiers, who cleared heavy equipment from the barracks at military air bases so TV news crews could film everything the Canadians from outside the bases' perimeter fence would have a clear shot at the ceremonies. Eventually, the Harper

government quickly dropped its policy. Gordon O'Connor used to be Harper's defence minister, and critic of O'Connor from across the centre of the Commons were, as a rule, answered with angry assertions that as a witness, O'Connor must be beyond reproach. The problem is that he kept screaming up *Prisoner Abused in Afghanistan*: "The Red Cross or the Red Crescent is responsible to supervise their treatment," O'Connor said of the prisoners. Not true. O'Connor restricted his efforts to collect only explain Canadian policy with regard to detainees because so bogged down in incoherence that he was eventually relieved of his defence post.

In the shuffle that followed, Peter MacKay replaced O'Connor, only to be replaced at Foreign Affairs by Massimo Bernier, who in turn was replaced by David Emerson after Bernier ran into problems with his brief. The highlight of Bernier's tenure as Canada's secretary to the world—I will restrict myself here to the professional highlight—was a trip to Afghanistan with boxes of Joe Louis snack cakes for the troops.

## On the most fundamental matters of statecraft, Harper simply isn't serious



This is the man of foreign matters Harper sent out to spread the message of a newly active Canada, a Canada that was "back," a Canada whose foreign policy would "actually be successful." These words, a strapping headmaster and no wonder Liberal, were duck. If Harper is so fixated, and night now that's probably the way to bet it, his next for Afghanistan will be his fourth, and Canada's seventh in seven years.

So the problem with his Iraq speech is not

so much that it was plagiarized, it's that less than two days before he rose to the Commons to lecture a Liberal government on its lack of seriousness, Harper handed the speech-writing duties to follow whose main message not was Google.

No wonder Harper likes Iraq, as the years wore on and Iraq turned out to be a merry war, to slip lightly past the minutiae he expressed in that speech. Concession cheaply obtained can, as all farmers, just as cheaply be discarded. Thus Harper announced just before the 2006 election that he had not meant "support" for the war to mean sending Canadian troops. What he had had in mind was more modest, perhaps a fruit basket or MacBarnier and his snack cakes. By this week, Harper's spokespeople were eager to claim that a shooting war with massive casualties, the central foreign policy linchpin of the Bush presidency, should not rank among the important issues in an election. And that since Harper gave the speech five years ago it should be considered to have vanished in the mists of time.

But 25 US soldiers died in Iraq in Sep-

tember September 1008. If you believe decisions have consequences, you cannot disown them after they become inconvenient. That Harper—T's sorry, Howard—speech is the most not travelled. If Canadians do not need to pay Iraq much mind today, it is because John Chretien rejected Stephen Harper's—f's sorry, John Howard's—coalition in 2003.

And if you think Iraq is just war, then you must soldier on without Stephen Harper's help because on this issue, he cut and ran a long time ago. In August 2003, he told the magazine "There is no peace to the position Canada took." He has long since found the upside.

Meanwhile, there are still Canadian soldiers fighting and dying in Afghanistan. I believe their cause to be just and would consider keeping them there post 2011. It's true that in this campaign, Harper's call they will be re-mission post 2011, but who pays any such in that? On the most fundamental matters of war, peace and statecraft, he simply isn't serious.

ON THE WEB: For more Paul Wells visit his blog at [www.macleans.ca/colleagues/wells](http://www.macleans.ca/colleagues/wells)

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OPINION

## Bailout talk in the prison waiting room



BARBARA AMIEL

My TV screen is awash with silver-haired men talking about the U.S. government's bailout plan. As far as I can see, there was easy credit taken up by reckless money with speculators standing by to make money on them. The bubble burst. I listen to talk about what's good for Main Street and Ordinary Americans and I wonder what place these silver-haired men have.

The women I sit with each week in the waiting room at the Federal Correctional Institution know all about Main Street. That's where they window-shop. So when I watch imperious Suze Orman, TV's best-known personal finance expert, say "these are deep problems," referring to the bailouts, and she's right of course, all I can think about is you'd never see such a glorious display of bling, black-gold and midnight on Main Street.

When Suze opens her caring eyes so wide you can see her iris without a simplified vocal learning or perfect enunciation, and tells a caller asking if this guess will affect her disability benefits and welfare to "Wike up! You should have thought about that long ago. No one is going to look after you but yourself." I want to wave my wand and put Suze in the film *Trading Places*. I'd have Suze and the perfectly starched silver-haired men trade places with the women sitting with me at FCIT. "Wike up!" Suze says. "Those women never get to sleep. All that yatter yatter yatter on TV about what to do with your trade or 440 (K) retirement plan a fine—if you're a corrupt TV host or a starched silver-haired male."

Donna Lee is in her 80s, wither-walting-don't. Her dad was a small-time tobacco farmer in Kentucky. She was the last of seven children—all of them dead now, one in Viet Nam, one with spinal meningitis, three with cancer. "What do you do?" I ask her. "I'm a seamstress, makers, all my life," she says. Her

big ambition was to work as a servant in the White House but her husband, a car salesman, "made a mistake"—his first offense—and now he's on suicide watch because he can't get the medicine for his psychiatric condition in prison.

Donna Lee had colon cancer, now she's got liver cancer, and she has a bad osteoporosis and she can't serve "no more." She wants to work but if she earns more than six extra few hundred dollars a month, she loses her monthly \$950 disability payment. You can see she was running even back when she was working at the "tag" at a cocktail waitress in the Holiday Inn.

When she got the American Dream she made sure they had a food-rate mortgage

not going to sell her that 60 per cent of the money was paid by the top five per cent of Americans because it is the working people that keep American productivity so high even if it's the CIO class that pay most taxes.

Then comes to the prison straight from night shift at a factory she's got two kids, her men stays at night. Then looks after them in the day when visiting ends. The factory is closing back because they can't make the payroll, which some bailout bill might prevent. Linda teaches chemistry at a high school. She wanted that townhouse for her and her two daughters, and her boyfriend wanted to marry her but then he got into this trouble over marijuana and now that ARN (adjustable interest rate) has ballooned in interest. She borrowed from family but can't sell them. It's in prison to ease the school here, so "they think he's left me and I should find myself someone else."

There are millions of these women trying to survive while their men in "in debt." They're ashamed and afraid of losing jobs. The government takes away most every little thing they had one way or another during the post-recession period, reduces their so little, and increases criminal activity they don't want because they're afraid of a victimizer—though one kind of their men are probably sane.

These women get off their



## I want to wave my wand and put impeccable Suze Orman in the film 'Trading Places'

The government forced the sale of the house when her husband got into trouble—they got 10 days on hold for face foreclosure. The house sold for \$195,000 and their was \$477,471.00 was left after the mortgage and the real estate agents, the legal bills and the new roof the lawyer then bought told them to leave. "My first house. Break my heart," she says. Now the government has sold the apartment building which is and it's waiting to see if the new owners will let her stay.

Her prison stay is a 40 inch TV and she watches all the talk about the bailout "it stinks," she says, which is pretty much the view of the entire waiting room. "Bark," she says, "the U.S. taxpayer is paying for the mistakes of those top CIOs and all the other working people that pay the taxes and keep the country running." I think she's wonderful so I've

men. But her's the change, the view of this fiscal crisis in what CNN's Lou Dobbs tells them. Government money is just a "bailout" for rich banks and rich Wall Streeters at the expense of little taxpayers. America is run by the banks for the Bush family. These women are cynical and sad and mean and you'd think they'd have a whole lot of reason. But they're in the window with the cheering class.

They don't know how to make a difference either—they're just pleased the big guys are going under. The government closed them out of houses and cars and now they themselves are cutting off the bread they sit on. Giving through a welfare program, it seems, prevents on special interest like workers' over exemption from the tax on car loans. ■

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NEW JACK CITY: Layton returns to his political roots in Toronto to appear with some of his NDP candidates

# THE LAYTON TENDENCY

**He's urbanized the NDP but he still can't resist bashing business**

**BY JOHN GREER** • Jack Layton doesn't like "NDP" so much—the abbreviation, that is, not the party. Even if it's a comfortably familiar brand, his advisers say that to Layton's ear "NDP" sounds too personal. And it does too, when you remember he's not alone. Like NPR or CFL, the Layton has taken to saying "New Democrats" most of the time, which sounds like he could be talking about human beings, rather than just an institution. He's also begun to borrow the positive connotations of the U.S. Democrat brand in the name of Barack Obama. Sometimes he puts the accent firmly on "New," as if to imply, "This isn't your bawled high-school history teacher's party anymore."

And maybe it isn't. Rounding the turn of the 2008 campaign, the work of the central reliefed debates, Layton is running a different sort of all-right, New Democrat case. No doubt he's benefiting from comparisons with Liberal Leader Stéphane Duceppe's unimpressive effort. But there's also an aura of command and control around Layton, as if he is not only leading the party but he wants, he has also called the shots to make it real in

every. If Layton really is poised for a breakthrough, at Dion's expense, it's the culmination of five years spent updating the perennial also-ran brand of federal politics.

Those renovations began with the way Layton took over back in early 2003. He was supposed to face a close fight against Winnipeg MP Ed Stelmach, a pillar of the NDP's urban strategy and his mentor and father-in-law. This year, and is living symbol of its second Prairie social democratic success. Instead, Layton, a smooth-talking, broad-smiling interloper from Toronto city politics, scored a crushing 591-vote victory. It was the first time the party had picked its leader by letting members vote directly, including later on voting, rather than an old-style delegate convention. Layton exploited the newfangled system, reaching out beyond core NDP members. Unleashed week after week, he held forth on his acceptance speech, Layton is not rooted in the classic NDP blend of union power-brokerage politics and folkloric rural populism. It's showing in his campaign. Born and raised in Hudson, Que.—and son of a former Midwestern cabinet minister—he studied at McGill University in Montreal, and maintained the politician's made in mostly two decades of working and dealing on Toronto's city council. His base in the country's biggest urban centre, still a focal point

for resentment in much of the country, sets him apart. He's not apologizing. "I've learned most of my politics and my convictions that we need real change right in this city," he said this week at a rally in his downtown home riding.

Poling shows that his party's choices to contest Liberals in the race are coming in largely in urban centres. Harris Business reported on Sept. 27 that, among urban voters, the NDP had moved to put three percentage points back of the Liberals, whose big city dominance is vital to their remaining the only viable alternative to Stephen Harper's Tories. Occasionally for Dion, Layton/NDP had driven even among urban voters, arguably the most important Liberal demographic bastion. As well, the NDP was upholding off

urban voter support that had swung badly to the against Gosses.

It's not just Layton's coded style, of course, that has New Democrats dreaming of glory on Oct. 14. He and his cohorts of hand-picked strategists are pushing a platform designed to reassure NDP loyalists, but appeal directly to voters who previously disdained the party would pose in their interests. A telling example: in crafting a new child benefit proposal, the NDP decided to keep the "Yours" \$199-a-month payments for every child under six years old, even for the dual-income families. But they would then enrich existing benefits and fold them all into a single, tax-free monthly cheque of up to \$400 per child. And they would even allow it to scale: a family with two children making \$400,000 would get \$2,262 more a year, a bigger net benefit than the \$2,140 a two-child family making just \$40,000 would get. A senior NDP strategist explained the far reach in Monteleone's terms: Layton wants to compete for votes in two-income middle-class households.

For his big pretense to seem authentic, though Layton needs to defend his proposal for paying for them. His "balanced and responsible" platform rests on a single core revenue generator: he would reverse this year's Conservative corporate tax cut, which the Liberals propose to not only keep, but enhance. This one measure boasts what the NDP can plan to spend, without going

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into deficit, by a whopping \$7.1 billion next year, rising to more than \$14 billion at the end of a hypothetical four-year term. Layton rejects cutting taxes for "banks and oil companies" doesn't make sense. Harper and Dean say he doesn't understand how courts compete for investment. Indeed, in the first five years of the 21st century, 34 out of the 19 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development nations cut their corporate tax rates, and most raised them. Countering the charge that he wants to risk Canada's chances of lasting investments, just as the economy tanks, could ruin any Lay-

tonian, as certain since the spring of 2005, when instead of joining with the Tories to defeat the Liberal minority, he cut a deal with Paul Martin to shift \$4.6 billion to NDP priorities like more transit and affordable housing. A key architect of the bargain, Bob Gallagher, now Layton's chief of staff, had only recently arrived in Ottawa at that time. He had previously worked for Layton's wife, MP Olivia Chow, whom she was a Toronto city councillor. (Asked coyly if he is a "loyal family retainer," Gallagher responded, "More like an indebted servant.")

Other key writings in Layton's backroom also tend to bring experience beyond the party's Parliament Hill core, with its long tradition of homebody disengagement. Prominent among them is Brian Topp, a one-time senior aide to Ray Robinson when he was NDP governor in Saskatchewan, who is Layton's campaign director for the race and sought election. Under Layton, improved organization can be measured in dollars: In the first half of this year, the NDP raised \$1.8 million, very close to the historically much richer Liberals' \$1.5 million, though far behind the Tories' \$8.3 million.

Layton plans to spend the full \$11.5 million allowed in this campaign, buying paid work, the big parties for the first time. "We've developed the infrastructure to pay people in question. The regional piece is missed. Tories have sell

## COUNTERING CHARGES THAT LAYTON WOULD RISK CANADA'S ALLURE FOR INVESTORS IS HIS BIGGEST CHALLENGE



LAYTON'S CLAIM to pragmatism leaves him vulnerable

can's toughest challenge in the campaign's stretch run. He doesn't shy away from a business-bashing message, leaning heavily on stump-speech lines about "politics for the kitchen table not the boardroom table." At times, it comes across as backwood-class warfare rhetoric. At best, it's a variation on the "Man Served 'Whil Served" talk that has cost them three days in early U.S. politics trying to pin on the right side of the financial crisis.

Any erosion of Layton's claim to being a pragmatist could be damaging. He's been portraying himself as a player, not merely a

single selected to making the NDP, rather than the Liberals, their main target in B.C. Polls suggest NDP candidates are competitive in a handful of Montreal ridings where they never before stood a chance. Nationally, though, NDP support is up only modestly. Early this week, Harris Decision put NDP support at 13 per cent, compared to the 17.5 per cent of the popular vote the NDP garnered to win 29 seats in 2006. If Layton is to do much better this time, the numbers will have a long way to go to catch up with the way he's talking. ■

### FOR THE RECORD

#### COSY-SWEATER GUYS CAN'T ESCAPE HARGO'S FIRE

"When he think that putting on a blue sweater and a quilted make us think, 'what a kind-hearted, cozy, cute little jerry! Let's throw a few fuzzy sweaters with us on the fire because, I'll tell ya, you'll get more warmth out of that than you'll ever get out of that iceberg of a Prime Minister!'"—Canadian Mary Walsh, playing Marg Delahunty during a St. John's boogie in which she torched Stephen Harper-style sweater vests.

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TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HAIR



# WELCOME TO HARPER'S BUBBLE

Nothing unexpected, no one uninvited, everything in its place

**BY AARON HERRST •** Photographers are summoned to a spot behind an office building in an Parliament Hill for 8:30 a.m. There they are provided with directions to the meeting's photo-op—down in the living rooms of a nondescript, middle-class Ottawa family whose three sons, all under the age of 12, play the violin, viola and cello respectively. Shortly thereafter, a dozen reporters huddle outside the same Hill location and are driven to the Conservative party campaign headquarters, located on the second floor of a nondescript two-story office building on the outskirts of the capital.

Inside a makeshift television studio, that first family is joined by a second nondescript, middle-class group, this one with four girls and a boy. And with children on either side of them—the kids looking nervously perplexed, frightened and bored—Stephen Harper makes another small, but not insignificant, appearance or cameo at another small, but not insignificant, segment of the Canadian population (an offer of a tin of coffee to parents whose children are enrolled in artistic activities). After words, reporters are permitted to ask questions, following a predetermined order. Spending out of turn is not tolerated.

"I think what the Prime Minister has learned from previous campaigns is that it's important to have discipline and focus on all aspects of the campaign," says Tim Powers, a Conservative strategist, "from the way a issue is run to the messages that you're giving out."

The Prime Minister, though looking a bit tired on this Monday morning, dispatches the queries handily. Unfortunately, one of the human props behind him is too slowly the wrong girl, seemingly overcome by the stage lights, looking off stage and wobbly as he's pulled off stage.

The odd loss of a headboard member isn't the first times human prop has been overcome during the campaign—this is what

senior reporters have come to call Stephen Harper's bubble. Nothing unexpected, no one uninvited, everything in its right place. The liberals, who have been faulted for constructing a less-imaginative bubble, have found great joy in quarrying the Prime Minister's isolation—keeping weekly count of how many of Harper's events have been open to the general public, compared to those of Stéphane Dion. An last count is now Dion 16, Harper 6. The Prime Minister did take time from the campaign trail to attend his high school reunion. Though his that relatively uncontrolled setting, he was subsequently heckled.

## STRATEGY

The only other backlist to reportedly breach the bubble had to do at an event in Rockland, Ont. The RCMP quickly removed him from the premises. The Minister was virtually daphnized to black reporters who attempted to question the Prime Minister shortly after the party's au-

ing at all. "I think it's a lot of the charm in the charming classes and the people who pay more attention to this than perhaps we all should," Powers says. "I think what [journalists] people are interested in seeing are what their leaders are doing and what they are offering them and they're not as interested in the mechanics."

Perhaps, all candidates are, to some degree or another, isolated. And most of everything as a campaign in a vacuum. So perhaps that question is here for the mechanics push the campaign from reality. And whether ensuring life inside the bubble qualifies one to govern life outside it.

Later this day, it's off to Val d'Or, 500 km north of Montreal. As the campaign bus rolls from the airport through town, a woman leans out the passenger side window of a jeep and extends a middle finger at the camera. Her salute is answered by various other gestures. Apparently blessed of advance notice, 100 union protesters are waiting at the conference centre where Harper is scheduled to speak.

Inside, there are only supportive faces, each strident stamped with blue Stephen Harper stickers and squeezed into a nondescript ballroom set as a meeting, where they will cheer at the appropriate points and, if necessary, bang their fists together or wave placards. The Prime Minister speaks efficiently and almost entirely in French, save for a couple of English disarming fall-



ONE GIRL WAS OVERCOME AND HAD TO BE LED OFF STAGE

of a dignified often led to the suspension of a campaign staffer. He returns trying to question Dana Coleman, a Conservative spokeswoman in British Columbia and the widow of former MP Chuck Coleman, were also stunned, reportedly at the behest of an aide to Harper.

"Certainly," Harper said recently, asked about his campaign, "my security situation changed radically once I became Prime Minister."

All of which may mean something or nothing

of a dignified often led to the suspension of a campaign staffer. He returns trying to question Dana Coleman, a Conservative spokeswoman in British Columbia and the widow of former MP Chuck Coleman, were also stunned, reportedly at the behest of an aide to Harper.

Behind Harper are three rows of human props, the youngest girl dressed up in front, a representative assortment of teenagers and adults standing behind them. The people have of already been ragged and, not one of them collapses under the lights. ■

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE GRANITZ

# UNGODLY UNION

It's pro-choice and progressive, but Catholics love the Bloc

**BY MARTIN FERGUSON AND PHELIPPE GOSNIE •** Quebec, so the myth goes, is the world's last refuge. Nowhere else in the country has the revolt against the Church been so pronounced or so ingrained into the collective mind-set of its people. Like "Dagbladet" and, often, "Idun," religion is an integral—yet dirty—word.

CAMPAIGN 2008

QUEBEC

Strange, then, that Quebec is the only place religion has crisscrossed up as an issue in the campaign. Two Conservative candidates, Jacques Boeschard and Rodrigue Allard, are members of Quebec-based Pentecostal churches whose members believe humans created the earth 6,000 years ago—which earned the pair some mocking press coverage. Still, the evangelical movement has an undeniable presence: there are roughly 75,000 Quebec evangelicals, and some 3,000 people attend the weekly Sunday service at Église Nouvelle Vie, located at South Shore Church.

Luc Harvey, the Conservative member for the Quebec City region of Louis-Hébert, has actively opposed the Pentecostal vote in his region—all the better to improve his list next victory in 2006.

Another Conservative candidate, Nicole Charest-Bonnet, is a member of Opus Dei, a conservative Catholic organization perhaps best known for its notorious turn in The Da Vinci Code. Bloc Quebecois leader Gilles Duceppe tried to make her faith an issue, saying it was an example of the Conservatives' "narrow-minded ideology."

In Quebec, Opus Dei is tiny, numbering less than 200, its members practicing Catholic brothers, however, is anything but. According to Université de Montréal researcher Christophe Talbot, there are about 650,000 Catholics in the province who attend church at least once a month—nearly 30 per cent of the total population, which is overwhelmingly Catholic itself, if only in name.

Nation to the contrary aside, Talbot says, religion is alive, well, and politically active in Quebec. One stranger: despite the Conservatives' fiery on-stage platform designed to attract downgoing folk, it's the Bloc Quebecois—a left-wing party whose leader is a

former Communist and avowed pro-choice activist who often rails against the Church's involvement in public affairs—that does surprisingly well with the faithful.

In 2003, Talbot concluded, roughly 50 per cent of Quebec's practicing Catholics voted for the Bloc. Though such has changed in eight years, notably the formation of the Conservative party and its recognition of its status Québécois, that support has remained relatively stable.

"There was very little change between 2004 and 2006, so it's fairly safe to say that 2008 will be similar," Talbot says. "It's a contradiction, but the political leader who is the most devout and the most pro-choice and in favor of both assisted suicide and stem-cell research is Conservative Member of the House of Commons, among its members. According to Life News, a Toronto-based pro-life group, not a single Bloc member opposed abortion



SOME SAY Catholics like Duceppe because he's a separatist against meddling outsiders

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pioneer Henry Morgenthau's Order of Canada nomination. Moreover, religious voters tend to be older and more conservative than their urban counterparts. Yet Jean-Claude Lévesque, Le Devoir's religion correspondent, says the Bloc's stance on fighting poverty has tilted Quebec's Catholic support leftward. "That's the most dynamic element of the religious vote," he says. "It's little known, but many people in the religious community are involved, along with members of the clergy. Religious people tend to have a greater sense of civic duty than others."

And thus there is a warning. Though the Bloc has, out of a mixture of political expediency, ceased talking about another referendum, it won't a sovereignty party, and as a way, Tabin says, it's taken on the traditional role of the Catholic Church in Quebec as a vanguard against meddling outside [and, English] influence on the province. "Yes, the Bloc is a little bit to the left, but sovereignty remains one of the biggest influences in the party, and it goes beyond the traditional right and left," Tabin says. "There are people on the right but who vote Bloc because they are sovereigntist."

To Raymond Givens can certainly attest to this. An ordained Catholic priest, Givens was a Bloc MP until he resigned in September, and is in many ways representative of the party's unique stance on religious matters. Pro-choice, pro-gay marriage and a former street worker in Montreal's gay village, Givens was nonetheless hugely popular with his Catholic base, thanks to his charismatic urbanite style—and furthering his popularity with his stance. "All the positions where I've worked have been almost totally over against," Givens says. "It's the same for the priests, to the point where I never had a problem speaking about Quebec sovereignty at churches during elections."

There's still a big Catholic vote beyond the reach of the Bloc Quebecois. The trouble with the other federal parties, at least according to one of the province's better-known religion advocates, is that they haven't gone far enough in attacking it.

"The parties treat too lightly an certain subjects—they're scared," says Jean Tremblay, mayor of Saguenay and outspoken proponent of biblical morality. "Like abortion, homosexuality, marriage. The parties barely talk about them. They're scared of losing a share of the vote." That prevents certain ideas from crystallizing.

Quebec's faith-on-essay front may have wavered, certainly, the rise of the Conservative party was the stuff of fictional drama not three years ago. Despite apprehensions, though, it seems Quebec's two dominant religious, Catholic and sovereigntist, aren't nearly as dead as they may appear. ■

# CAMPAIGN IN VAIN

**All that hoopla and voters still haven't changed their minds**

**BY KATE SEMAK** • Do election campaigns really matter? Do they help people make up their minds—or even change their minds—about who to vote for on election day? According to Susan Soroka, co-director of the Media Observatory at the McGill Institute

for the Study of Canada, the best efforts of Stephen Harper's media may be failing to move voters around. "If we're looking for evidence the campaign has shifted the vote considerably," he says, "we'd do best to look elsewhere. In Canada's federal election, 'so far, there's not much going on.'"

According to the 2008 Federal Election Newspaper Analysis Project, a weekly election feature in *Maclean's*, the campaign has been remarkably quiet so far. Harper continues to shape the debate, consistently earning more than double the media coverage of Liberal Leader Stéphane Dion. "It's all about Harper," Soroka says. "We're not missing out

there Sept. 21 to 27, the third full week of campaigning, Harper was mentioned first in about 77 per cent of election coverage. Dion, meanwhile, was mentioned first in 16 per cent. Their parties are more evenly matched: while the Conservatives were mentioned first in 28 per cent of articles over the same week, the Liberals got first mention in 24 per cent. (Jack Layton's NDP party trailed with 10 per cent of first-party mentions, and so on per cent of first leader mentions.)

Soroka's team classifies mentions as positive, negative or neutral, then selects one quote from positive and a "not sure." Harper's rating has generally improved since Sept. 1, while Dion has been up and down. Overall, the Tory leader is proving the more popular of the two—Harper's total net

score is 0.09, while Dion has a 0.2. Yet it's the Green party's Elizabeth May who, with an overall net score of 0.6, has earned the best of any leader. And while the Greens don't get nearly as much coverage as the major parties—they scored just two per cent of all first mentions last week—what they do get has generally been favourable. Like

their leader, the Greens have an overall net score of 4.6, the best of any party. (The Conservative leadership contest will run some of next, the Liberals have 0.4, and the NDP has zero.) Maybe because they aren't perceived as a threat, "other leaders are less critical of the Greens," Soroka says. This could help explain their high score.

As for talking points, the economy continues to dominate. Last week, one-half

of all election coverage mentioned economic or employment issues. Meanwhile, 29 per cent touched on the environment or energy, and 16 per cent mentioned foreign affairs (including Afghanistan). Of the 16 topics tracked by Soroka, Aboriginal affairs has so far attracted the least amount of attention, with just one per cent of election coverage mentioning it.

All in all, Soroka agrees, the third week of campaigning looks much like the week before. So election campaigns really matter? "Not all of them do," Soroka says. "Whether the campaign matters to voters or not, remains to be seen." ■

**CAMPAIGN 2008**

**THE MEDIA**



**HAR STILL gets little coverage, but it's positive coverage**

before the Oct. 14 vote, it says other party leaders have yet to mount a significant challenge to the Prime Minister.

The Media Observatory conducts an automated analysis of election coverage in seven newspapers: the *Globe and Mail*, *National Post*, *Montreal Gazette*, *Toronto Star*, *Calgary Herald*, *Ottawa Citizen* and *Vancouver Sun*. Shifts in media content, Soroka explains, can predict similar shifts in public opinion several days in advance (this is partly because journalists are often the first to learn of policy announcements and other news, Soroka says). Tracking media reports, then, is a valuable way of anticipating voter shifts.



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interstate highways passed it by, and now global cities are hanging out what name-the-thing contest. "Today, with 10,000 residents, it's less than half the size it was at the turn of the last century. A large hospital is the area's largest employer, followed by a local university called Broward State."

The McCain camp had designated Scott's a "senior county" in place that gave voters funding and recognition from the national campaign. John McCain himself came to speak at the local high school in July. In 2004, George W. Bush came here to campaign, making him the first sitting president to set foot in the county since Herbert Hoover passed through on his way somewhere else. "Scotts County is the political fulcrum of all the swing counties," says Jerry Johnson, the chairman of the Scotts County Republican Party.

A doctor who lives in the hills over the valley, Johnson embodies the genuine hostility of the place. "I was a Democrat because my father was a Democrat, and his father was a Democrat. I'm from a senior family. But I am a conservative person and back when N-Gore and George Bush were

running against each other, I felt the Democratic party had crossed the line that I could not identify with it on everything from the Second Amendment to fiscal conservatism," he explains. After the terrorist attacks of September 2001, he joined the Republicans and voted county-wide. In 2004, he chaired the

WORKERS at the Democratic headquarters in Portsmouth (below), the Portsmouth Beauty Academy (bottom)



**OHIO REPUBLICANS  
ARE MORE COMMITTED TO MCCAIN THAN  
DEMOCRATS ARE TO OBAMA**

Bush-Cheney campaign in the county. A member of the Ohio National Guard, he served tours of duty in Iraq and in Kuwait, and is headed back to Iraq in February as a flight sergeant. Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin-style social conservatism plays well here. "If the candidate," predicts Johnson, "that'd be treated like a rock star."

Though McCain has a slim lead of just over one per cent in the state, it is certainly possible for a Democrat to take this region and Ohio—a certain kind of Democrat, at least. The popular Democratic governor of Ohio, Ted Strickland, is from Scotts. He's the son of a steelworker and a former congressman, with a record of voting against abortion rights and against trade agreements, and an "AC" rating from the National Rifle Association. He backed Hillary Rodham Clinton and her gritty economic message during the Democratic primary, and the upset Ohio 51 percent to Obama's 45. Bill Clinton came and stayed for her in Portsmouth. In Scotts County, Clinton got 11 per cent of the vote. Clinton's critics in Obama's camp say she's proven her track. Out

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# How a second chance led to the founding of Second Cup.

Frank O'Dea was once that young homeless guy begging for spare change on Jarvis Street in a filthy T-shirt. Alcohol and abuse had led him there. Courage to change and a woman who simply said, "You're home" helped him come back. Ten years later he co-founded Second Cup and he was awarded the Order of Canada in 2005. O'Dea strongly believes in CAMH's amazing work in addiction care and research. And in the power of a second chance.

To hear Frank's full story, and others like it, please visit

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side the Dan Ghees, a downtown real-estate shark. Dave Goddard, 41, a registered Democrat who supported Clinton, says he remains undecided between Obama and McCain. "I had of wish Hillary had got in. She's been in this field for 30 years plus. She had a lot of exposure to this budget and all that," he says. Goddard, who repairs hair pumps for a living, often loved to travel in other states to find work and figures he spent only eight weeks at home last year. He belongs to the Homelessers' Union, which is "pushing Obama, but I don't know," he says. "Oh gosh, I just haven't heard enough yet." Clinton's endorsement of Obama didn't sway him. "They campaigned a lot against each other and now they're trying to support each other? People are just vacillating back and forth. 'Oh yes!'"

Wiping on their foreheads, newlyweds Rosa and Brittany Greene, both studying to be teachers, are also skeptical about Obama. Anyway, it's plan to vote for McCain. "I'm a Democrat, but I've noticed that Obama is telling me he's the guy," she says. As for her daughter, she answers, "I can't think of anything new." But she adds that "McCain seems more honest." Then says he'll wait until the last possible minute to decide, in case a scandal emerges about either candidate. The couple plan to

leave Portsmouth after they graduate from Shawnee State and move to South Carolina. They hear there are more jobs there.

Although on paper Obama's policy platform does not differ hugely from Clinton's, his economic arguments, such as a stimulus for the middle class and all promising universal health insurance, are edged by a snarl about the candidate himself. At the Portsmouth Beauty Academy, Shonelle Burton, 38, is one of a group of women, on matching yellow shirts and black sweats, waiting to sign

**HARD TIMES** A store closing in New Bedford, neighborhood Downtown Dan Bailey remains undecided



attached to name tags, some of which have dairy tattoos on their plastic necks. Burton is a mother of three who for 10 years worked in a local paper mill. "I did everything—counted paper, altered paper," she says. "I operated self-guided vehicles."

"This plant is shutting down and moving abroad! Everywhere you look, our jobs are going overseas," says Burton, who is returning as a hair dresser thanks to a government grant, aimed at workers whose job losses can be linked to increased exports or production moving abroad. Burton figures that even if she works 10-hour days in her new career, she probably won't make as

much as she once did. Her husband used to work in a steel mill but was injured on the job. She says he should be receiving Social Security benefits, but her unemployment benefits are considered too high.

She may sound like the kind of voter who would pick the unseen-backed Obama—who has criticized trade agreements—over the ardent free trader John McCain. But she won't. "His middle name, does really bother me," she explains. That middle name is Hussein. "They haven't really voted his middle name

**ONE WOMAN SAYS THAT OBAMA'S 'MIDDLE NAME ALONE REALLY BOTHERS ME.' THAT NAME IS HUSSEIN.**







# CUBA LOOSENS UP

## Raúl Castro brings a new mindset to Fidel's 'revolución'

BY CAMERON AINSWORTH YERDRE

During ceremonies held in July 2007 to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Cuban revolution, Raúl Castro, the shy and reserved younger brother of Fidel Castro, told a crowd of 200,000 loyalists in the city of Cienfuegos that the country was in serious peril, struggling to survive and meet the needs of its people. "No one country can afford to spend more than what they have," he said during a one-hour speech. "Others more, we have to begin by producing more, with a sense of rationality and efficiency." His nobody could have predicted the massive wave of reforms that Raúl would implement after Fidel Castro retired as president in February. The man who stood by his brother's side for more than 40 years—supporting Fidel as he severed ties with the U.S. and imposed suffocating policies on steering Cuba in a new direction, and with a radically new mindset.

To ease Cuba's ailing economy, Raúl has invited private farmers to plant tobacco, coffee and other crops on 50,000 state land in an effort to put more food on the table for all Cubans and bring in hard currency from exports. (Farmers who do well can increase their holdings by up to 40 hectares for a 10-year period that can be renewed.) He's made it easier for state workers to gain title to their homes and relaxed an earlier policy of giving performance cash incentives to workers. In addition, Cubans now have the freedom to rent cars, stay in luxury hotels, buy consumer electronics, and use cellphones, albeit with certain restrictions.

On the ground, some changes are easy to spot. "They have a fascinating bus system now, where people aren't rationed to the gills like they used to be," says Susan Dubinsky, a history professor at Queen's University, who in May visited Havana to launch a course on Cuban culture and society in conjunction with the University of Havana. Over the past three years, Cuba has ended more than 6,000 bus lines from the country's second-largest trading partners, behind Venezuela. Trade between Cuba and China has blossomed from an annual US\$400 million in 2001 to \$2.2 billion last year.

While in Cuba, Dubinsky also met Raúl's daughter, Mariela Castro. At head of the National Centre for Social Education, Mariela

is pushing forward legislation to recognize same-sex relationships and the rights of transsexuals. In June, her efforts paid off with the news report that Cubans could undergo sex change operations, even surgery.



## PERHAPS THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCE IS HIS APPARENT WILLINGNESS TO REPAIR RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.



WINDS OF CHANGE: New buses, and cellphones for Cubans

is taking that message to the state and will cover the cost. It's a qualitative move by a regime that formerly sent gays and lesbians to forced labour camps for "re-education." Some observers say that Raúl's motivation is a personal belief that his brother's revolution needs to be reformed. "That's a more

flexible frontier. He's not a liberal, but he's more liberal than his brother," says Robert Wright, an expert on Cuban history and author of *Three Nations Menace: From the 1950s, Fidel Castro and the Cold War World*. Wright adds that Raúl, like Fidel, is keenly interested in the well-being of Cubans, but is more open to getting there past some of the limitations of Fidel's revolution.

One step of Fidel's legacy that Raúl wants to change is what Wright calls "revolucion apartheid." To keep the country financially afloat after Moscow cut off its subsidies in the early '90s, Fidel permitted tourism to generate revenue. But wary of any country-resistance idea filtering to the masses, Fidel didn't want his people rubbing shoulders with outsiders, and Cubans were left to foot the second-class tourism, forbidden to walk on their own beaches or enter certain buildings. Now the government has allowed Cubans into tourist hotels and resorts.

Perhaps the biggest difference between Raúl and Fidel is that the younger brother is willing to repair the country's frosty relationship with the U.S., and there is a glimmer of hope that an American contender will outdo and learn from Barack Obama. Since 1960 to campaign on a platform that promises open dialogue with Cuba, to enhance Cuban emigration to the rest of America, Wright suggests the greater reforms are needed in Cuba when it comes to freedom of speech, freedom of the press and other basic rights that are championed in the U.S. Given the push down which Raúl has already taken his people since he officially took over as leader in February, it seems possible to suggest that it might just be a matter of time before Wright's suggestion becomes a reality. ■



**KIRIBATI: IT'S UNDISCOVERED TO SHARE A WHI**  
Laysan's "pandora's box" seems as though it's in the hands of the gods. The small South Pacific nation that barter with the world to share them. Because the traditional headwaters cost \$1,000 apiece, few lawyers in the impoverished archipelago can afford one of their own. Laysan is New Zealand, where whaling is still a sport, not a business. For years, it's been asking to be strangled some and help for the new Kiribati. The Kiribati are



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## Party split threatens South Africa

**BY HANCOY MACDONALD** • South Africa's ruling African National Congress is denying reports that it will split into rival factions following president Thabo Mbeki's ouster. But speculation suggested that a splinter group could form in the wake of a week of high-profile party resignations. Those included 11 members of the ANC cabinet, plus Minister Shikwaba, premier of Gauteng, the country's wealthiest province. Several ministers have since returned to the table, but Shikwaba says that he cannot support the way the party forced out Mbeki nine months before the end of his term. In Mbeki's place, newly elected party president Jacob Zuma has named Kgama Motlaleli, an ANC gold-miner, friendly to both camps. As interim president, Motlaleli will lead South Africa until the next election, when Zuma himself will likely stand for the presidency.

On the surface, the political crisis appears to be straightforward: power struggle between Mbeki and Zuma. Not so, says Elin Zuma, Zuma's wife.



**BECKI'S RAPID** departure caused several resignations from the ANC

as area speaker with South African Call to Action in New York state. "It is about competing visions for South Africa's future," she says, noting that influential left-leaning elements, such as the Congress of South African Trade Unions and the country's Communist party, back Zuma.

Below the surface, the race rule 95-year-old party—once an intractable mix of racism, Communism and trade unionism—has been by definition an economic and social policy, which Mbeki's ouster has opened up.

Still, for now, a split is simply not in the cards," says Anthony Haines of the U.S. Council on Foreign Relations. "The group surrounding Mbeki is too small." But the ANC is no longer a revolutionary liberation movement. As South Africa's democracy matures, the once-common goal of independence no longer serves to lead. ■

## Lebanon and Syria: on the brink of war



**SYRIA HAS** amassed 10,000 troops to police its border with Lebanon

**BY PATRICIA TIERRE** • Syria's Damascus and other violent embassies in Lebanon are coming perilously close to war. Last Saturday a car bomb exploded near a security services office in Damascus, killing 27. Hardline Syrian militants from the northern Lebanese city of Tripoli are lead suspects. Syria's official news agency said the SUV used in the attack had been traced to a group in an unidentified neighboring Arab nation that urges Syrians to kill those believed to be traitors. Some think it's no coincidence that the attack was directed at Syria's government, which is controlled by the minority Alawites, an offshoot of Shia Islam that extremist Sunnis consider heretical.

The bombing, combined with Monday's car bombing in Tripoli that killed at least five, evokes one of the bloodiest chapters of sectarian strife: more than 20 people have died in battles in northern Lebanon between the region's majority Sunnis and Alawite guerrillas. Last month, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, an Alawite, warned his Lebanese counterpart to deal with the "problem of terrorism" among the Sunnis.

The Islamic, many of Lebanon's Sunnis support Saad Haddad, son of former prime minister Rafik Hariri, whose 2005 assassination was widely blamed on Syria, which occupied much of the country. Soon after, Syria bowed to international pressure and withdrew.

But as tensions might soon be back, Syria has moved up to 10,000 troops on the border in the last few weeks. Officially, they are there to stop smuggling, but some analysts believe it is an unmistakable warning that the Sunnis shouldn't meet with the Alawites. Everyone is now waiting for Assad's next move. The ruling family takes threats very seriously in the 1960s, his father brutally suppressed an uprising among Syria's majority Sunnis. Thousands died. ■

## Russia plans huge nuclear expansion

**BY CAMERON ABERNETHY** • Since becoming president of Russia five months ago, outgoing warhawk Vladimir Medvedev has made a point of flexing his country's military muscles. Last month, he sent warships loaded with fighter jets to the Caribbean to participate in joint military exercises with Venezuela, and in August Russian tanks rolled into Georgia to help pro-Russian separatists in the breakaway region of South Ossetia. Now Medvedev is flexing Russia's aggressive stance with what will arguably be the country's biggest investment in nuclear technology since the Cold War.

Last week Medvedev announced that Russia will build a new space and missile defense shield, while modernizing its nuclear delivery

over the next eight years. He ended old military commitments to upgrade nuclear formations to "the permanent readiness category" by 2010, and declared that Russia would begin

mass production of warships, primarily nuclear submarines, to carry out strategic nuclear missions. "He stopped short, however, of divulging the status of developments related to the new Russian class nuclear submarines. The talk—a huge source of pride for the Kremlin—was designed to carry a new treaty commitment called the Borei-M, which has a range of 8,000 km.

Russia's reasoning for beefing up its military is twofold. First of all, the Kremlin desperately wants to restore itself as a global power. But just as importantly, it wants to counter the growing influence Washington has in former Soviet-controlled territories such as Georgia, Ukraine, Poland and the Baltic states. Russia is already engaged in a heated battle in Georgia between Russia and Ukraine from joining NATO, and Medvedev is furious about the U.S.'s attempt to establish an anti-missile shield across eastern Europe.

Perhaps the biggest reason for the hike in military spending, however, is simply that Russia can't afford to be. Old money is going into the country's coffers, and as long as it does, Russia's military expansion will soldier on. ■



**MEDVEDEV** says Russia will "mass produce" nuclear submarines

GETTY

MACLEANS OCT. 13, 2008

45

# IT'S GOING TO GET WORSE



**Why the Wall Street bailout—if it ever comes—won't save America's economy or ours** BY STEVE MAICH

It may have been the oldest tradition of democracy you'll never see: hard-core southern conservatives allied with ultra-liberal members of the Congressional Black Caucus, blue-collar Republicans from the Rust Belt, and a couple of dozen conservative Democrats hewers as the "Blue Dogs." As a group they rarely agreed on anything before in their lives, and may never again. But they agreed on this—Treasury Secretary Henry

Paulson's \$300-billion plan to rescue Wall Street from a rating tide of toxic debts was a no-go. And on Monday afternoon, 228 of them rejected the biggest private sector bailout in history and triggered the sharpest one-day plunge in world stock markets since the 1987 Black Monday crash.

Some said it was morally indefensible that ordinary taxpayers, many of them worried for their jobs, should have to foot the bill to

support rich bankers whose idea of hardship is having to sell one of their vacation homes. Others complained the plan failed to address the root of the problem: millions of ordinary people declaring bankruptcy and fleeing foreclosure. With public opinion firmly against the deal, many simply agreed to side with the voters and let the chips fall where they may. On his way out of the House of Representatives after the fateful vote, Rep. Steve Rogers,

been building for years, if not decades. The world's biggest and most dynamic economy has been moved on a mission of debt from the national government on down to the millions of ordinary families with hefty mortgages and wallets full of *asset-on-paper* plastic. America bought an outdated standard of living on credit, and trading partners around the world pulled steadily from the free-spending culture. Now the bill is coming due. Credit has dried around the world, led by the U.S. Federal Reserve, are pumping hundreds of billions into the system in hopes of keeping it moving. But first, even if they combined with Paulson's massive transfer of tax dollars



and hedge funds in hopes of deflating the spread of panic around the world from this, taxpayers would receive an ownership stake in their own companies, along with provisions to discourage excessive executive pay at recent firms and a promise that, if the program was still losing money after five years, the president would make taxpayer losses less than new fees and taxes.

Klayman, yet, but ambitious too. Paulson was asking lawmakers to take unprecedented action, in the face of overwhelming public anger, in the midst of the most convoluted and sprawling financial crisis in modern history. They would respond \$383,300 for every

For a \$300-billion intervention, there was a certain elegance to Henry Paulson's financial rescue plan. A new federal agency called the Office of Financial Stability would buy hundreds of billions in distressed assets (mostly toxic mortgages) from ailing banks.

to Wall Street, only buys a temporary deferral, not a solution.

"Everybody keeps saying if we do nothing, there's going to be a severe recession. Yet there is. There's no way around it," says Peter Schiff, president of Euro Pacific Capital in Connecticut. "We have to take our lumps. We've got to pay the price for all our sudden borrowing and spending."

How painful will that lending be? Worse than anything we've faced in our lifetimes, he says. It does come with a price tag that would force a new world economic order, with sharply higher interest rates, a weaker American dollar, surging prices and shortages of consumer basics. These are the areas that are going to hurt the most, and while not everyone believes it needs to get that bad, such warnings are fast gaining currency all over the world. There is no way any way out of the economic war tightening around America, and all the many countries, like Canada, which only outside their own periphery. Last week, with major banks failing, some 400,000 Americans running a race of 10,000 a day and unemployment climbing steadily higher, it was clear that something big was happening. Something that is going to change the way we live for decades to come.



million, women and child in America to buy assets that nobody else in the world wants, as prices nobody else will pay. And, just like that, a huge swath of bad debt would be cut out of the financial system like a malignant tumor. Banks would be forced to go back to the business of lending, buyers would return to the housing market, consumers would begin spending again—and, after a few rocky months, America's economic miracle would be back on the tracks. True, you'll be adding the taxpayers with potentially huge losses, but there was a distinct chance that economic



trouble returned, many of those investment gains might actually recover and more, if not all, of the government's \$300 billion would be recovered. Uncle Sam took a similar trek with bad loans back in the Great Depression and wound up turning a small profit.

The trouble with that, as dozens of economists were quick to point out this month, is that the U.S. economy isn't suffering from a single tumor that can be isolated and removed. The problems are systemic and more akin to a virus, spread in the combined housing crisis but affecting every corner of the economy, and rapidly spilling across borders to infect other nations as well.

We all know by now, the spectacular U.S. housing bubble, which saw prices rise by 85 per cent over a major market in the decade leading up to 2006, has reversed itself with prices in some areas falling by as much as 50 per cent in the U.S. have fallen by 24 per cent from the peak reached two years ago, and Robert Shiller, a professor of economics at Yale University, is one of many leading observers warning that the decline isn't nearly done yet. He notes that during the Great Depres-

# "Downhome life is better"



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From a once-a-week newspaper business that was founded 20 years ago to cater to Newfoundlanders living outside of the province, Grant Young has built Downhome Publishing into a lifestyle company. Today his business includes a monthly magazine, book publishing, retail outlets, wholesale mail order businesses and a winery.

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To learn more about Grant Young's story  
www.macleans.ca/bdc

ties, real estate values plagued by 30 per cent. This time, he says, the decline could be worse because prices rose so much more sharply in the past decade than they did in the 1970s. "Even if prices stop falling and just stay at that level, we share investors are owed to million people whose house's value is less than their debt," Shiller and co. an interview with CNBC. Indeed, there are few signs that the U.S. real estate market is near a recovery. Last month, Newhouses had an all-time high of almost 304,000 and new house sales did to their lowest point in 17 years.

That sudden plunge in credit quality has caused a panic in the murky world of derivative investments. Over the past decade or so, banks, hedge funds, insurance companies and pension funds invested tens of trillions of dollars in complex derivative securities. They were designed to spread risk, and to allow companies to offer on far more debt than they would otherwise be able to handle. Derivatives helped put the real estate market on steroids and, when markets were rising, those derivatives yielded spectacular profits. But as housing prices declined over the past year and a half, those derivatives plunged in value, and left financial institutions in a struggle for survival.

The list of victims so far includes Paine Mac and Prudential Mac, the two giant American mortgage guarantors, American International Group, which a year ago was among the world's biggest insurance companies, Insure like Washington Mutual, Countrywide Financial and Citigroup's Northern Rock, and several Wall Street brokerage firms like Lehman Bros. Every one of them was doomed by their own portfolios of derivative contracts. And because there is no central clearing house or exchange for such derivative contracts, it is neither possible to know which firms are more at risk. Already, banks around the world have written off



more than US\$150 billion in bad loans, and Mounier Rabinov, a professor of accounting at New York University, projects that numbers could rise as high as US\$1.9 trillion. If Rabinov is right, dozens more banks will collapse in the weeks and months ahead. The federal government will never dig itself out of



to US\$100,000 per person, but the scale of the personal devastation will still be more than, as will the strain on public finances. "We are now in a generalized panic mode, and back to the risk of a systemic meltdown of the entire financial system," Rabinov said in a note to clients on Monday.

Naturally, banks are suddenly desperate to conserve cash at all costs. In the days following the collapse of Lehman Bros. and the rescue of AIG, many banks even refused to make overnight loans to each other, forcing the U.S. Federal Reserve to make billions in short-term capital available to prevent a whole sale collapse of the credit system. But banks continue to tighten their lending conditions and increase their demands for collateral, it's becoming increasingly difficult for anyone to borrow - right from the biggest Wall Street institution to the smallest homeowner and small businessman. "Think of credit as the oil that keeps the global financial engine running," explains Mohamed El-Gamal, chair of Rice University's economics department. "If you drain the savings of oil, it's not long before the gears begin to destroy each other."

El-Gamal describes a devastating chain reaction. Frightened banks refuse to lend, even more credit consumers and businesses are unable to get loans needed to make major purchases and fund day-to-day operations, companies are forced to scale back, putting many people out of work, the slowing economy depresses demand and more people lose out of business, which leads to more debt defaults, which forces the banks to be even stricter with credit. Eventually, desperate financial institutions try to close up their capital by indiscriminately selling whatever stocks and bonds they own, leading to a breakdown in stock markets and thereby adds to the panic as people see the value of their retirement funds dissipated. Once it starts, this spiral is extremely difficult to reverse.

Unless the U.S. Federal Reserve and Congress can somehow work the financial credit system, analysts say the impact will begin to be felt within days. "We're already seeing a week economy and if we don't see the credit markets improve within the next week or two, we start to see some businesses having dif-

# 'INTEREST RATES ARE GOING TO SKYROCKET. THE DOLLAR WILL PLUNGE. PRICES WILL GO THROUGH THE ROOF.'



iculty," Gary Thayer, chief economist at Wachovia Securities in St. Louis, told Reuters. "This could lead to increased layoffs within the next month."

There are already many signs that the crisis is spreading as interest rates in August, U.S. consumer spending was unchanged from a year earlier, despite the fact that the government has sent US\$90 billion in cash to companies in 2008 in an effort to stimulate spending, and several economists now believe that overall spending may have declined during the summer months - the first time that has happened since 1993. One look at consumer finances explains why so many are so afraid to go shopping. In the past decade, U.S. credit card debt has risen by about 80 per cent, to more than US\$900 billion. Last week, analysts at Invesco Strategic Value Advisors in New York warned that American leaders could be hit by as much as US\$46 billion in delinquent credit card debts next year.

Already, banks and lenders are scrambling to serve Downhome. Credit is offering to merchants' payments, up to US\$150, if they agree to pay off a large chunk of their business and stop using their plastic. Retail giant Target will last week shut a growing number of its credit card customers aren't paying their bills, and that those customers who are are paying less. The retailer wrote off US\$8.7 billion of its credit card accounts in August, and analysts fear the charge-off rate could rise even further in the coming months. In November, Wells Fargo, HSBC and Bank of America each notified customers that they were voluntarily cutting back on credit lines on millions of accounts.

"This is a 100 year flood for the financial industry, we've never seen this level of risk in lending before," says Brian Berkman, director of financial economics at Global Insight. "We're in uncharted territory in terms of how to deal with it, but the bottom line is we should not underestimate the problems. That is how we got into trouble."

Needless to say, the plunging stock markets have put people into a state of shock, watching the value of their retirement savings dwindle with each passing market. Canada's S&P/TSX composite has tumbled 12 per cent since June, and in the U.S. the Dow has been falling for a year - a decline of over 25 per cent so far. The financial impact on consumers will put even more of the job market in continued to soar, as expected. The U.S. economy has shed 600,000 jobs this year and the unemployment rate has a five-year high of 6.1 per cent in August. But many analysts believe the worst effects of a slowing economy are still ahead. Chris Law, chief economist with FTD Financial Group in New York, said this week that 10 per cent unemployment is "almost inevitable." "It's inevitable to get real ugly," Law said. "We're looking at economic pain for two or three years."

It was John McCain, of all people, who sounded the alarm. In, considering just nine months ago the Republican presidential candidate from Arizona acknowledged that "there is not a single thing I've understood to need to do." On Sunday morning, just hours after Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson and various congressional leaders handed out the framework of a credit rescue plan, McCain supported an ABC's This Week with George Stephanopoulos, where he was handed opportunity after opportunity to trumpet the deal and even to claim credit for helping calm market ripples. Instead, he urged caution and expressed deep concern. "All we know is we're in the most serious crisis in our lifetime," he told Stephanopoulos. "We're working on a solution that will bring some stabilization, at best. Even if this plan works perfectly, there's still enormous economic challenges out there."

COURTESY OF THE BDC  
PHOTO: J. COLEMAN/NEW YORK TIMES

McCain may not be a crack economist, but he can read, and he knows that the U.S. government can't run up economic debt forever, any more than you or I can. And for most of the past decade, Washington has run every kind of deficit it could.

This year, Washington's budget shortfall is projected to reach an all-time record, just shy of \$345 billion, and is expected to remain near that level until at least 2010. As of July, the trade deficit was running at more than \$287 billion annually. The current accounts

and prices for everything in the United States will go through the roof. We're going to see government instituting price controls on food, rent, price controls on energy, which is going to lead to shortages, rationing in the streets and civil unrest. We're going to have massive inflation, nobody is going to be able to borrow money to do anything, businesses won't be able to borrow money. We are headed for a real, complete disaster."

To be sure, not everyone is quite so apocalyptic in their outlook as Schiff. Mahood



manufacturers in Ontario and Quebec are leaving from the slowdown, as are forestry firms in the West. Any deep economic decline in the U.S. would cut demand for all other commodities that have been driving the sector's boom for the past several years. The weak economy, Douglas Porter at BMO Nesbitt Burns and Benjamin Tal at CIBC World Markets worried separately that a deep U.S. recession will almost certainly drag down Canadian real estate prices—a market previously thought to be impervious to the turmoil.

This is the disaster scenario that the federal leaders weren't discussing on the campaign trail this week. Nor was Congress. As politicians batted around the merits and demerits of Paulson's rescue mission, the underlying realities of America's crumbling economy were far from the bidding. If General, for one, supports the bailout because it might buy some precious time, he is in quick to temper expectations—not just for Americans, but for everyone who has grown affluent and comfortable in the shadow of the American commercial juggernaut. "Right now it's like we're in the middle of a hurricane, and they're using duct tape to repair a cracked window and ensure that it doesn't blow open and destroy your entire property," El-Ghail says from his office in Houston. "Eventually the structural problems with the system have to be addressed. But, every time the immediate crisis passes, there is no political will to make the painful changes. No one's willing to live on credit. You can put it off to the next generation, but at some point you get close to Ponzi finance as which you're borrowing to pay the interest on your debt. Then the real crash happens."

That is, if the real crash isn't already upon us. ■

While Jason Kirby

## 'RIGHT NOW WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A HURRICANE. THEY'RE USING DUCT TAPE TO FIX A CRACKED WINDOW.'

deficit, which takes into account the flow of investment dollars, stood at \$261.5 billion in the second quarter. What all of these staggering numbers have in common is that they rely on foreign dollars to be funded. When the U.S. government spends more than it collects in tax revenues, it issues bonds to cover the shortfall. Since 1997, the total consolidated public debt in the U.S. has risen from just over \$285 trillion to almost \$261 trillion—a staggering, historic escalation, most of which has come in the past five years.

The single biggest funder holder of U.S. debt is China, which has gladly bought up as much debt as Washington wants to issue, because Americans keep buying Chinese-made products with all that pay money. The problem is the same as it is for anyone running up a massive credit card debt with no clear plan of how to pay. At some point, and nobody knows exactly when, foreign investors like the Chinese will become concerned about America's ability to service its mounting debt payments and will look to protect themselves against a default—cutting back on the amount of debt they will finance. If and when that happens, it would trigger a sudden plunge in the value of the U.S. dollar, and unleash a series of consequences that make the current market turmoil seem pitiful by comparison.

"Eventually, somewhere along the way, the dollar is going to break, the foreigners will stop coming, and we're going to have a much bigger crash," Schiff says. "America won't be able to sell any of its debt, interest rates are going to skyrocket, the dollar will plunge,

El-Ghail uses more measured terms, but he agrees that the U.S. is now in the early stages of a historic adjustment. He says the value of the greenback, which has already fallen by a quarter against other world currencies, must continue to decline. That will make U.S. exports more competitive, but it will also massively increase the price of imported goods—everything from food to electronics to commodities like oil. And even a managed decline in the value of the U.S. dollar brings with it the threat of inflation, which means interest rates will have to rise significantly to keep price increases in check and to encourage Americans to save and to rebuild their nest eggs.

It all adds up to a devastating of the American dream and a stretching down of the U.S. as a standard of living, with huge ripple effects for trading partners like Canada that rely heavily on the spending of ordinary Americans to prop up our economies. As all Canadians know, this country's economy is heavily tied to the health of the American consumer, with 70 percent of Canada's exports flowing south of the border in 2007. Every one per cent decline in cross-border trade with the U.S. pulls about \$5 billion out of Canada's economy. Already,



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INSPIRING PEOPLE OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

EMPLOYEE  
of the  
WEEK

### DON'T LET YOUR DENTIST REPOSSESS HIS WORK.

If you ever have dental work done in the German town of New Ulm, be very sure that you settle your bill as soon as you can. Police there have arrested an unnamed dentist after he turned up at the home of a woman who failed to pay for two dental bridges. He reportedly forced his way into her home, tied her up, forced her mouth open and removed the bridges. Police are investigating him for assault and theft of property.

APRIL 10, 2008

## Harley's big un-American growth bid



**DESPITE the cult status of 'Easy Rider,' Harley's sales are shrinking**

**BY KATE ULIAS** • In the 1969 film *Easy Rider*, a leather-clad Peter Fonda and Dennis Hopper moon the Harley and his road. Forty years later, few things are more iconically American than speeding down the highway on a Harley Davidson motorcycle—but thanks to a struggling U.S. economy and soaring gas prices, the big bikes that made Harley famous aren't selling like they used to. The motorcycle manufacturer's sales are looking as if they could be heading south, as in those other countries, including Canada, to boost its flagging sales.

Harley Davidson, which depends on the American market for nearly three quarters of its revenue, saw U.S. sales of heavyweights bikes fall over 10 per cent in the first half of this year. In April, the company announced it would cut its workforce by eight per cent and reduce bike shipments by thousands (it shipped 330,616 bikes in 2007, five per cent fewer than in 2006). With its deep penetration of the U.S. market, Harley's been "a victim of its own success," says Craig Berni, senior analyst with Robert W. Baird & Co. "If the U.S. market slows, there's little it can do to change that."

Canada, though, is a different story. Thanks to a strong dollar and less generous market sales have been up. The company sold 10,070 bikes in Canada in the first half of 2008, up 11 per cent from last year. Revenue says (Canada accounted for four per cent of Harley's revenue in 2007). Internationally, Harley's retail sales grew by 14 per cent last year over the year before. And the company recently expanded into China.

Outside the U.S., "the Harley brand resonates very well," Karmann says. It recently finished among the top 10 global brands in leadership annual rankings. Easy Rider, then, may be the quintessential American road film—but if Harley has its way, riding a H-D down the highway won't be as quintessentially American anymore. ■

## Why sexist men make more money

**BY GATHY GULLI** • It's been scientifically proven and proven—literally. A new study in the *Journal of Applied Psychology* shows that men who favour traditional roles for women earn up to almost \$12,000 more a year than those who believe in equality.

Researchers at the University of Florida surveyed participants from 50 states four times between 1979 and 2005 (the study started with 12,646 people, then was a 60 per cent retention rate). They asked them how much they agreed with this statement: a woman's place is in the home, a wife with a family has no time for outside work, an employed wife leads to delinquent children, it's best that a man be the breadwinner, a woman is happiest at home caring for kids.

Not only do sexist men make more than progressive ones, "traditional women make the least amount of money," says author Beth Livingston—\$1,593 less a year than women with egalitarian views. What's surprising is that even when researchers controlled for education, job type and number of hours worked, the result was the same.

Charlatans may equal high-tech for males for two reasons, says Livingston. Traditional men may be aggressive and good at negotiating high salaries. On the flip side, "even



**THE STUDY also found that traditional women make less**

who are sticking up for female counterparts may be perceived as "affronting the gender backlash effect," she explains. Meanwhile, traditional females may bring down progressive ones by confirming the stereotype that women don't want to work. Livingston adds.

If you think the more money you make the more likely you'll be to adopt conservative views, guess again. The most traditional beliefs were found among the youngest participants, those 14 to 22 years old, long before they were high on the payroll. The good news: charlatans dispelled with age. ■

## Third time lucky for Microsoft?

**BY COLIN CAMPBELL** • "I'm a PC," began the latest advertisement from Microsoft, "and I've been made into a monospace." The line is a riff off the long-running "I'm a Mac" Apple ads (it's even delivered by a Microsoft employee dressed up to look like the brown-haired PC character in those ads.) It's followed by a host of people, from self-help guru Deepak Chopra to musician Phish's Will Krause, proudly declaring "I'm a PC."

The new strategy, "is all about Apple," says Rob Holm, director of research at Directions



**STRANGELY, the latest batch of Microsoft ads is all about Apple**

on Microsoft. The company wants to blunt Apple's recent attack ads and is perhaps more worried about its smaller competitor than it previously let on. But this new strategy is also one Microsoft took a long time to become. The path to arrive at. The spot is the third effort in a campaign the company has offered up in just two months—part of a \$100 million marketing effort that at times has resembled more than a marketing campaign, a coherent plan.

First came the Mojave experience, in which it filmed focus groups in "garages" (interviews enjoying its troubled Vista operating system—so to say, "Hi! You like Vista, you just don't know it.") That was followed by the already infamous Jerry Seinfeld and Bill Gates ads. They were amusing (and the duo living with a suburban family to try and "connect" with real people), but in true Seinfeld form, were about nothing. All along the company suggested the ads were merely teasers but, given how badly they were dropped, that seemed like a convenient excuse.

The ads Apple ads suggest there may have been a method to the madness after all. "They did inform that the Seinfeld ad was more about creating noise than delivering a message," says Holm, "and now we've seen what the message is." The bill and Jerry co-edited with Seinfeld taking Gates about the company's future: "Give me a sign," he says. "Well, I'd have to say, that is. Microsoft finally has something to say. ■



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A MACLEAN'S SPECIAL REPORT

# CANADA'S TOP 100 EMPLOYERS



The Top  
100 list  
60



Lessons from  
Canada's worst  
employers - 64



How to spot  
really bad  
bosses - 70



Why on-site  
daycare is  
still rare - 72



Diversity  
does make  
time - 76

**These are the employers who know what it takes to get the best and brightest workers in Canada. Want a job that goes out of its way to make you happy? You've come to the right place.**

**D**o you get four weeks of holidays to start? How about an eight-week paid sabbatical every 10 years? Do you get your salary topped up to 100 per cent when you go on maternity leave? Sabbatical on-site daycare? You don't? Then you need to look closely at this year's list of Canada's Top 100 Employers.

For the eighth year running, Maclean's has partnered with Toronto publisher Macdonald to bring you Canada's most comprehensive independent study into workplace benefits. After reviewing the recruitment histories of more than 75,000 employees, and inviting

about 16,000 of those to apply, Macdonald managing editor Richard Yermes has produced a list of the 100 employers in Canada who offer the best places to work. To produce this listing, Yermes and his team assigned grades in seven key areas, including work atmosphere, family benefits, vacation and performance management. The result is a detailed picture of the latest trends in workplace perks, which is now available free of charge, complete with the reasons for each selection on Macdonald's job-search site, Eluta.ca.

So what's new this year? The *Canadian Security Intelligence Service*, for starters. Spas need benefits too, and for the first time

even CSS has made the Top 100 cut—thanks in part to its ethics recruiting drive and maternity leave top-ups to 60 per cent of full pay. (Johnson World Service, another Top 100 company, offers even more, with top-ups to 100 per cent of pay.) Also new this year are several environmentally friendly programs, such as transit subsidies, secure bicycle parking facilities and even showers for workers who bike.

Many of the best benefits from prior years, such as long-term vacations, on-site gyms and the options to convert unused benefits to cash, are back too. And yes, public relations firm Hill & Knowlton Canada arms for another year with their famous weekly office beer cart. Along with the in-house fund for company functions offered by RIM's software Canada line, that may be one of the least likely perks to catch on. Just it's nice to know that it's there. ■

# THE TOP 100



**They offer flex hours, on-site daycare, transit rebates and free gyms. They're Canada's top employers, and they're raising the benefits bar. BY RICHARD YEREMA**

Below are the 100 companies in Canada with the most to offer workers. The companies are not ranked—they are classified by industry and presented in alphabetical order.

(\*) Indicates number of Canadian full-time employees

## CONSUMER SERVICES

**CARSWELL**  
Publishers, Toronto: The Thomson Reuters division has approximately 120-140 employees; 95% of sales for eight weeks: \$5,500 a week; insurance per child (\$41)

**CONFESS GROUP CANADA LTD.**  
Food services company, Mississauga, Ont.: Food and training program to help women advance into management level positions; compensation: one week pay benefits to 30% of salary for six weeks (\$15,942)

**FAIRMONT HOTELS INC.**  
Luxury hotels & resorts, Toronto: Full opportunity to travel the world including Asia and South Africa; discounted rates at the company's hotels and resorts for employees and their families and friends (\$1,334)

**BELLA CANADA LP**  
Home furnishings retailer, Burlington, Ont.: On-site day care; flexible work programs available; one in opportunity as an even 25 associates (\$1,401)

**L'ORÉAL CANADA INC.**  
Cosmetics company, Montreal: On-site daycare; discount workplace has specialty coffee bar and library; and discount cosmetics; boutique international training courses in Paris and New York City (\$1,200)

**MAIR CANADA INC.**  
Food service, Bolton, Ont.: Casual on-site mother offers snacks at work in day care hours; childcare purchase program; one on-site fitness training; generous referral benefits (\$678)

**PROCTER & GAMBLE INC.**  
Consumer products, Toronto: In addition to a paid personal days off workers can receive vacation days by transferring unused credits from health benefits plan (\$1,674)

## FINANCIAL SERVICES

**CANADIAN TIRE FINANCIAL SERVICES LTD.**  
Financial services, Markham, Ont.: Important array of long-term health benefits for retirees; optional education savings risk-free guarantee (\$1,338)



**HOPE FURNISHING**  
Helping with work-life balance, flexible work and paid personal days



**L'ORÉAL CANADA**  
Offers a coffee bar, transit and discount cosmetics

**RBC BANK CANADA**  
Financial services, Mississauga: Carbon neutral through investment in wind power; advance parents get \$4,000; three paid study days; university scholarships for kids (\$5,777)

**NORBERN CREDIT UNION**  
Financial services, St. Catharines, Ont.: Vacation subsides up to \$2,000 as outside institutions; paid time off for volunteering (\$400)

**OPSEW PENSION TRUST**  
Pension manager, Toronto: Black ly visit by a union representative, on-site yoga and exercise classes; generous parental leave; 14 paid personal days off (\$144)

**ROYAL BANK OF CANADA**  
Financial services, Toronto: Nearly one third of workers take advantage of flex time; one employee is paid personal days plus matching RRSP contributions (\$2,000)

**RUSSELL INVESTMENTS CANADA LTD.**  
Investment management company, Toronto: Tutor subsidy up to \$8,000; eight weeks paid educational every 18 months; only clothing on long-term use; one-on-one (\$1,300)

**TORONTO-DOMERON BANK**  
Financial services, Toronto: Low interest; home bank; shareholder plan; training programs for employees with foreign credentials (\$1,472)

## INDUSTRIAL AND RESOURCES

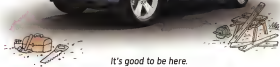
**ABCOH GROUP INC.**  
Construction development firm, Toronto: Grand prize for employee recognition program is a trip for two using CEO's air miles; sunny fields are a win-win (\$942)

It's good to have a helping hand.

It's good to do things with your own hands. It's good to have an extra set of hands. Your son's. Your daughter's. It's good to start projects together and see them through. It's good to seat seven, but have versatility to make room for 2.7 m<sup>3</sup> (95.4 cu. ft.) of cargo. It's good to have up to 2268 kg (5000 lbs.) of towing capacity in a refined and sophisticated crossover. It's good to have kids, especially when they like to help.



legendary Toyota Camper (2nd row) seating allows you to comfortably seat up to 7 passengers.



It's good to be here.

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**HOT TOP EMPLOYERS**  
now give workers time  
or four weeks of paid  
vacation to start

**ALBERTA PACIFIC FOREST INDUSTRIES INC.**  
Pulp facility, Maple, Alta. Property has a 10-lac-acre trout pond. Dams built for life and walking trail. Fourth week of vacation can be taken as time or cash. (3-57)

**JO CANADA INC.**  
Shoe retail, equipment manufacturing, Okanogan, Ont. Kanto and body sculpt classes at supervised fitness facility. Flexible plan based on interest in fitness or without age limits, matching RSP contribute to 100%.

**BOEING CANADA TECHNOLOGY LTD.**  
Aerospace composite manufacturing, Winnipeg. Ten month term. Winnipeg division provides tuition subsidies at night for institutions. Financial help for foreign travel. Traveler to complete full-time university program, matches RSP contributions. (1-548)

**CAE INC.**  
Flight simulation manufacturing, Montreal. Study abroad, year and bonuses and share-purchase plans. Full tuition subsidies to extend education as well as on-site training centre that leaves top up to 75% of salary for 18 weeks. (3-325)

**CASCADES INC.**  
Paper products manufacturing, Kelowna, B.C. Six-week RSP plan for 100 company property in 100% "Toronto or Montreal matching RSP plan. (1-630)

**CEMENTATION CANADA INC.**  
Cement manufacturing, North Bay, Ont. Carving and golf tournaments for workers and their spouses as well as volleyball games, generous tuition subsidies at public institutions. (3-227)

**ENRIDGE INC.**  
Nuclear gas distribution, Calgary. Four separate benefit plans plus workers given cash equivalent for unused benefits.

vacation starts at three weeks, plus 12 more paid days off per year. (3-551)

**SPCOR UTILITIES INC.**  
Electricity and water supplies, Edmonton. Vacation amounts on terms computer equipment purchase, workers can take five personal days off each year in hourly increments, subsidized employee sports teams. (3-552)

**GREAT LITTLE BOX CO. LTD.**  
Box manufacturing, Mississauga. Boxes are given to employees, all employees get on firm right when profit goals reached; free on-site fitness centre. (1-514)

**RODAK GRAPHIC COMMUNICATIONS CANADA CO.**  
Printing equipment manufacturing, Burnaby, B.C. Comprehensive leave top up to 120% of salary for eight weeks, profit-sharing plan. Travel subsidies and bonuses for workers who take. (1-445)



**SUBSIDIZED ON-SITE**  
spas are now commonplace. Many companies offer free classes too.

**LAURENTIDE CONTROLS LTD.**  
Process automation products, Kirkland, Que. All employees and partners were given a paid Canadian cruise vacation given to last week after last year on the job. (3-22)

**NEW FLYER INDUSTRIES CANADA INC.**  
T-shirt box maker, Winnipeg. Full salaries for apprentices during their training, salaries were includes for shifts and summer classes, birthday off with pay. (3-208)

**PCL CONSTRUCTION GROUP INC.**  
General contractors, Edmonton. Worker benefit from a "pension loan roll-in" plan—all senior managers are long time employees, recently opened a 530 million housing development. (3-636)

**SPELL CANADA LTD.**  
Petroleum company, Calgary. Discount on gas purchases to all benefits cover retirement savings at outside institutions. (4-351)

**SPRUECLAND PLYWOODS INC.**  
Lumber products, Alberta. Alls Marketing ends when production target reached, annual meetings for all employees in water facilities share ownership plan. (1-45)

**SUNCON ENERGY INC.**  
Energy company, Calgary. Up to 17 paid personal days on top of vacation, scholarships up to \$1,000 for workers' fees, flexible health benefits. (3-463)

**TOMYOTA MOTOR MANUFACTURING CANADA INC.**  
Automobile manufacturing, Cambridge, Ont. Employees get \$1,000 off vehicle per year, great fitness facilities, prizes at Christmas party include \$10,000 for a new car, activated zero waste landfill target. (3-166)

**TRICAN WELL SERVICE LTD.**  
Oil and gas well equipment, Calgary. Personal top up to 100% of salary for 12 weeks for new hires and 36 weeks for those phased in retirement leave program. (3-537)

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES & COMMUNICATIONS**

**BLAKE, CASSIDY & GRAYDON LLP**  
Law firm, Toronto. Top employee retirement management with \$10,000 donation to charity of their choosing, \$1 million scholarship program for law students. (3-45)

**CHRY HILL CANADA LTD.**  
Environmental consulting engineers, Toronto. Full time training, environmental development award program for employee who make major environmental projects. (1-156)

**CHRY HILL CANADA LTD.**  
Human resources services, Mississauga. Full time training, workers nominate an employee for firm paid southern coast on profit sharing plans and bonuses. (3-346)

**PSC ARCHITECTS & ENGINEERS**  
Engineering and architectural consultants, Newfoundland. All employees share in year-end bonuses, paid time off to volunteer at favorite charity, phased in retirement work options. (3-5)

**DANMA-OPRACARE MEDICAL LABORATORIES INC.**  
Diagnostic laboratory services, Phoenix, Ont. Phased in retirement options, matching RSP plan, employees earn at three weeks salaries. (3-567)

**GOLBERG ASSOCIATES LTD.**  
Engineering consultants, Burnaby, B.C. Unconditional career opportunities through in-house employee exchange program, profit sharing and share purchase plans. (3-372)

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## HALIFAX HERALD LTD.

Newspaper publisher, Halifax  
Flexible to full-time including  
retiree benefits, generous tuition  
subsidies, paid holidays etc. (243)

## MILLIKEN, ORITA &amp;

## KASSARAIN INC.

Architectural firm, Toronto  
Full career salaries plus  
secure bike parking and shower  
facilities at "green" office,  
health benefits for full- and part-  
time employees, paid time off  
for volunteering. (300)

## HILL &amp; KNOWLTON CANADA

## Public relations firm, Toronto

Employees lounge complete  
with bar and media room  
weekly effort bonus salary bonuses  
up to \$1,000 for volume  
completions. (205)

## JACOBS WHITEFORD LTD.

Consulting engineering firm,

## PICKAWATERHOUSE-

## CODPERS LLP

Accounting and professional  
services, Toronto, Ontario  
\$13,000 on behalf of the employee  
members of the year annual  
bonus allowance to \$3,500,  
paid-time off to study for CA  
exams. (3773)

## SANKET

Communications company,  
Burlington, Ontario  
Massive online training  
system offers more than 700  
courses, free membership to on-  
line fitness centre, individual  
private pilot. (2363)

## STEWART ELIOTT LLP

Law firm, Toronto, Flexible work  
schedules, referral bonuses up to  
\$1,000, flexible earned days off  
program. (202)

## TAMM COMMUNICATIONS INC.

Advertising agency, Toronto



SOME CONCRETE  
work after their work-  
ers paid time off to vol-  
unteer for charities

NEW "GREEN" OFFICES  
such as bike lock-ups  
and transit subsidies  
were seen this year

Dartmouth, P.E. I. has leaves  
top up to 75% of salary for 32  
weeks, tuition subsidies, summer  
work placements for engineering  
students. (132)

## KPMG LLP

Audit firm, private finance  
services, Toronto, Salary up to  
\$20,000 for top-performers, generous  
flexible holiday and time off  
for volunteers. (3144)

## HARRIS CANADA LTD.

Insurance broker, Toronto  
Discounted home and auto  
insurance and low interest home  
loan, summer hours full  
salary subsidies. (1315)

## PARIENT NEWS

Publishing Inc., Burlington,  
Ont. Suburban office has private  
club on site, fitness facilities and  
outdoor volleyball court, after-  
hours program for employees  
young children. (191)

Employees start with four weeks'  
vacation, workers have exclusive  
use of a Quebec island estate  
annual winter dining affairs at  
heritage building. (24)

## WARDROP ENGINEERING INC.

Consulting engineering firm, Win-  
nipeg, Subsidized home and auto  
insurance, winter dining affairs  
lower cash bonuses of up to 50%  
for good job performance. (449)

## YELLOW PAGES GROUP

Telephone directory, Verdun,  
Que. After-work work sessions  
include telecommuting  
flexible working hours. (1,330)

## PUBLIC SECTOR AND

## NON-PROFIT

## OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR

GENERAL OF CANADA  
Federal government auditor,  
Ottawa, Unpaid leave of absence



multiemployer, must leave top-up of  
82% for 32 weeks. (2553)

## CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S AND

## SOCIETY OF TORONTO

Child support services, Toronto  
Five employees get up to four  
weeks vacation, extended  
maternity leave for up to three  
years, in-house training programs  
and a special education leave  
program. (1977)

## CENTRE FOR ADDICTION

## AND MENTAL HEALTH

Hospital, Toronto, Full-time and  
adoptive trip up benefits to  
\$3K for 30 weeks, online and  
in-house training programs, chari-  
tarian property in their off-  
mound site, "cottage village"  
recreation. (2423)

## CERTIFIED GENERAL

## ACCOUNTANTS

## ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

Accounting representation,  
Burlington, P.E. Annual \$300 trans-  
portation subsidy plus communal  
bikes to replace local bus system,  
has an on-site gym with yoga and  
ballet, camp classes, winter holiday  
coverage. (122)

## CHATELAIN KENT HEALTH

## ALLIANCE

Health care service provider, Miss-  
issauga, Ontario, Ontario, Ont.  
Post-graduate nursing certificate  
for doctors, employee general  
top-up benefits, elder nurse grant  
to allow to work on-line privately  
developing pilot. (270)

## COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS

## AND SURGEONS OF ONTARIO

Medical regulatory body, Toronto  
Tuition subsidies of up to \$3,000  
per year, medical studies up to  
more than 50% of management. (247)

## DURHAM REGIONAL POLICE

## SERVICE

Police force, Whitby, Ont.  
Employees work options include  
flex hours, job sharing, com-  
pressed workweeks and tele-  
commuting, parental leave up to  
75% of salary for 37 weeks for  
new dads and 52 weeks for new  
moms. (1343)

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#### EXPORT DEVELOPMENT

**CANADA**  
Export corporation, Ottawa.  
Motivates trade (top-up) to 95% for 25 weeks; employees language instruction in English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Portuguese. (1 076)

**FARM CREDIT CANADA**  
Credit co-operative, Regina.  
Personal loans up to \$100,000 up to 95% of salary for 36 weeks for recent university health benefits can be converted into salary advance interest savings. (1 295)

**GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY**  
Educational institution, Toronto.  
Free on-site fitness facility including regular yoga classes; free work apparel; guaranteed personal leave benefits. (1 145)

**HAMILTON GENERAL SERVICES CORP.**  
Health care services provider, Hamilton.  
30-member retirement pension program for eligible employees; after-school transportation plan for commuters; on-site diagnostic health emergency care space. (3 482)

**MONTREAL LYON CONTROL COMMISSION**  
Professional alcohol agency, Winnipeg.  
150 maximum complete industry education; maternity leave up to 95% of salary for 15 weeks; free pet care services. (3 475)

**MCILL UNIVERSITY**  
University, Montreal.  
Student on-site day-care; variety of work options including full-time/leave work; graduate internship program. (5 480)

**M.R. POWER HOLDINGS CORP.**  
Electric utility, Fredericton.  
On-site day-care; health programs for extended paid leave of up to two months. (2 415)

**NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD**  
Industry-related regulatory agency, Calgary.  
Free educational leave

**TORONTO HYDRO CORP.**  
Electric utility, Toronto.  
Employees can earn a week off with pay as part of United Way fundraising; generous parental leave top-ups. (1 537)

**TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL INC.**  
Film festival organizer, Toronto.  
Access to film screening and software plus staff perks for the festival tuition subsidies. (1 171)

**UNIVERSITY HEALTH NETWORK**  
Academic health services centre, Toronto.  
On-site 24-hour day-care; after-school child care; part-time employees; best-of-site wellness centre. (8 008)

**UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**  
University, Edmonton.  
Free on-site fitness centre; subsidized on-site day-care; travel subsidies plus shower facilities for cyclists. (2 520)

**CITY OF VANCOUVER**  
Municipality, Vancouver.  
Discounted passes and unlimited access to public transit and fitness centres run by city; flexible work options; subsidized personal interest courses. (5 433)

**CORP. OF THE COUNTY OF WELLINGTON**  
Municipal government, Guelph, Ont.  
Office in heritage area close to daycare facilities; transit rate and on-site bike parking; generous pension plan. (373)

**WORKSAFE B.C.**  
Workforce protection agency, Vancouver.  
Self-funded leave plan for employees; tuition subsidies up to \$5,000; on-site massage therapy visits. (3 134)

**ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNT**  
Culinary institute, Ottawa.  
Personal leave top-up to 95% of salary for a year; generous pension contributions. (775)

**SABKEMIST INC.**  
Natural gas distributor, Regina.  
Personal Credit Corporation loan; leave top-up to 95% of salary for 52 weeks; extensive training and development opportunities. (777)

**SASRATCHERMAN GAMING CORP.**  
Prestidigit controls of gaming agency, Regina.  
Health insurance; health-care services with on-site day-care; most leave payment up to 95% of salary for 17 weeks. (3 271)

**SABRATCHERMAN GOVERNMENT INSURANCE**  
Insurance provider, Regina.  
Traditional pension plan with options; retirement of work options. (1 587)

**SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY**  
University, Burnaby, B.C.  
On-site daycare; summer day-care program; fee acceptance; child care; free fitness facilities. (4 408)

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# 'THE WORST JOB I EVER HAD'

**How backstabbers, evil bosses and dumb rules taught our top firms what not to do**

BY JASON BRYANT AND KEN MACLEOD

The worst job Robert Miggy ever had, he says, was working as a "piss venter" in B.C.'s Fraser Valley. A piss venter is the unenvied task of the unholy tangle of harvested peaches and pods, and shovels them onto a conveyor belt where the peas are mechanically separated. It was the summer of 1962 Miggy was 15 and the pay was \$1.00 an hour for a 16-hour day. He still remembers the stink of rotting peas and steel. "It was just a terrible job, the most boring thing I've ever done," he says. If nothing else, it costed Miggy—now the president, CEO and owner of the Great Little Bean Co. of Vancouver—of any desire to pursue agriculture as a career.

That's the thing about awful jobs, there's always a lesson in there somewhere, though usually it's a lesson in what not to do. Every one has a story about the worst place they've ever worked. For him, it was their very first job, he it down on the farm, or shoving fries over a greasy hot stove. Others spent years building up their careers before stumbling into that perfect mix of a danderhead boss and a poisonous work environment that marks so many terrible job stories. Either way, when you find yourself working in an organization where milking on duty and demonstrating independent thinking are about as contrasting behaviors plague, it can be a downright soul-destroying experience.

Just ask the people who were fortunate enough to escape bad jobs for the infinitely brighter prospects of working for one of Canada's Top 100 Employers. Actually, that's exactly what MacLeod's did this year: he quit his Top 100 executive, managers and

employees about the worst jobs they ever had, and the lessons they learned along the way. Perhaps it's relief at leaving their crummy jobs behind, or the experience of knowing what a rich and rewarding work environment can really be like, but the people who work at Top 100 organizations seem to have kept a light into the bad habits, lousy management styles and employment problems many other companies seem to fall into. Sometimes the problems are caused by a few individuals. Other times they're systemic and infect every part of an organization. And almost always, there are no easy fixes. As those working at the Top 100 employers might say: happy work environments are often also—value-able jobs are each terrible in their own way.

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But when that boss also happens to own the company, after inhaling it from dear old dad, the experience is much worse. That's what Meggy discovered after leaving the position behind to become an accountant. In the early 1980s he landed a job as controller of the B.C. arm of a failing American donor products company. It was a family-owned business run by the third generation, a notoriously dangerous phase. The company made

money. "One steady or negative person can just destroy a whole department," he says. "I've seen that, and I always knew it would never have people like that here."

## A COMPANY OF BACKSTABBERS

But what happens when that's not just one negative person at an organization, but a whole army of them, ready to cut each other

any way to advance was by playing dirty politics, which in some cases involved planting lies about rivals to bolster one's own ambitions. "It was Machiavellian in a way, backstabbing," says McEwen. "There was always some kind of witch hunt going on and you never knew if you were the target or not."

Aside from backstabbing, the office environment, the culture of personnel often led to mistakes. McEwen recalls how underlings were never allowed to present their own work to superiors. Instead, as a project made its way up the food chain, successive levels of managers would take credit for it themselves, often inadvertently inserting wrong information into the presentation along the way. When things inevitably went wrong, senior management could always claim they were wrongly informed. "Then all of a sudden you'd come to work and find, well, just done the project that we all thought was great, would be great," says McEwen.

Her experience in managing director of Tatum Communications, a full-service advertising agency based in Toronto, couldn't be more different. McEwen immediately liked what she saw at the small company of 30 employees, which operated from a converted lofting with overlooking the city's downtown. For one thing, people actually talk and share ideas openly. On big advertising projects, she says, everyone from the creative team to the finance department—even receptionists—are asked for their ideas. "There's a huge difference in terms of your voice being heard," she says. "It's not more like a family. I've never met Michael such intense relationships with

my co-workers." And going forward, the sense of belonging is likely to grow even stronger. The firm's co-founders are in the process of distributing nearly half of the ownership of Tatum Communications to its employees.

## NOWHERE TO GO BUT SIDEWAYS

Nothing kills motivation faster than the knowledge that no matter how hard you work, or how much you produce, you're going nowhere. It's a depressing realization that all too many employees face at one time or another. For Scott Onda, that dark time

## Nothing's worse than an idiot boss who owns the company. 'We were broke and he wanted to buy a company plane.'

things—like color shingles and telephone poles—though not terribly efficiently. They lost things—like money—with much greater success. Meggy worked for the grandson of the founder. "He actually had a degree, which blew me away, but he had no concept of anything," says Meggy. "We were going broke and he was looking at trying to buy a company plane." Meggy backed up as management flew the company into insolvency, and eventually bankruptcy, thinking all the while "It could do better myself."

Indeed, he was well away from the workplace with many lessons learned. The result is the Giant Lard Box Co., which, with 370 employees and a spending near \$20,000 a year for rent on the Fraser River, says that little anyone. Meggy typifies the common theme



**BACKSTABBERS** "The only way to advance was by playing dirty politics, which often meant planting lies about rivals"

ing that characterizes many Top 100 employees and sets them apart from the rest. For instance, when building his new plant, he changed the architect's plans so that employees could gaze out over the scenic Fraser, wherever he built up the riverfrontage, with a volleyball court, basketball hoop, a picnic area and a deck for kayaks. He instituted a profit-sharing plan some 35 years ago, and regularly opened his doors to employees. Above all, in leaving the Giant Lard Box Co.'s corporate culture, Meggy drove in the owner's interest at his former employer, which was beset by arrogant leadership and a volatile environment.



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As it turned out, the company went bust a year later. But by then Perry had started a position with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, a newcomer to this year's Top 100 list, where she now works in the agency's personnel division. (Even though she's no

managers consider what those workers have to say. But try as he might, Stephan Arsenault could never get his old boss to listen. "I didn't have the right to speak to the manager to tell him the strategies they were following were not the right ones," says Ar-

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If it's not just the fast-food workers who have felt the sting of frustration at having their suggestions ignored by higher-ups, three senior executives, such as John Felton, who now works in human resources at pharmaceutical giant Pfizer, often use their words thusly: "I've been disappointed." At his previous company he tried to introduce employee feedback surveys and progressive benefit plans, but there was never any interest. "They kept saying, 'Why do we need to do this?'" he says. "But because our competitors are doing it, doesn't mean we want to." Bayer listened to John's view, though, and after 80 per cent of employees responded to a survey, the company awarded perks such as a driving range, lounge, pool tables and a quiet room. The reward was almost immediate. Since 2005, Bayer's turnover rate has dropped from 10 per cent to the one per cent.

It wasn't just the pointless rules that drove De Maria to frustration at his former employer. In the same way the barrage of corporate bylaws often gets in the way of his job

De Martin and the other Top 100 executives Maslach's talked to all have one thing in common: they recognize that their companies will never be better than the people who work there. "That's why they're making sure that the suffering they endured at their bad workplaces was not in vain. They don't want the poor leadership, poor internal communication and self-defeating policies that drove them away from previous employers to draw away the best and brightest from the company they work for now. It's not a bad way to think, as they fear our work force really is doing everything it should to keep work enjoyable and productive. In fact, your suggestion was to give a tiny Tish a moment to relieve her the worst job that you ever had. Think about what it was, exactly, that made the job so awful. Then ask yourself: could that happen where you're working now?" ■

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# EVIL AT WORK: BAD BOSSES

**They're not just incompetent, they really hate you**

**BY JASON KIRBY** • They *hate*, *disrespect*, *scheme*, *connive*, lie, cheat and generally make life miserable for untold millions of workers. They're bad bosses. And by some estimates, half of all managers fall into that category. But what exactly is it that makes this scourge of the workplace so harmful? As it turns out, it's in their nature.

For five years, Marilyn Haught, a business consultant in Arizona, studied scores of companies to see what makes lousy bosses tick. She found that truly bad bosses are not just incompetent—they purposefully set out to harm employees. Whether in mind, she classified the men and women she studied into bad boss “types” so employees would know what to look for, and realize who they’re dealing with. Using some of the classifications from Haught’s book, *What’s Afraid of the Big Bad Boss?*, we took a look at what makes both fictional and real-life menagers so evil.

**The Bully** While most people think of bad bosses, this is what comes to mind, says Haught. They’re loud, insulting, and frequently threatening. There’s no shortage of candidates who qualify as bullies, but one stands out: Albert “Chatterbox Al” Dundee because of his long list of thousands of jobs as a corporate executive in the 1990s. He ruled by instilling fear in underlings, until he himself got the ax from a publicity maker back then. When asked once if successful managers could be fearful, he optimistically replied, “You want a friend? They’re dogs.”

**The Puffer** Puffer bosses, as the name implies, fatten company assets into their own pockets, and convince employees to turn a blind eye to their schemes. Dennis Kozlowski, the former CEO of Tyco, is a typical example. At one time, he was best known for

his \$5,000 shower curtain and a life-sized wax statue of Michelangelo’s David that disappeared from one of his parties. Now he’s serving an eight-year sentence for stealing millions from his own company. He reportedly got away with it for so long because he spread the booty around to others in the executive suite through million-dollar “retention perks” and “special bonuses.”

**The Suppressor** Haught says this is the most common type of bad boss. “They constantly put down the achievements of other people and don’t want others to look better than

the Promoter,” Michael Scott, the boss played by Steve Carell on the popular TV show *The Office*, is clearly in over his head. In a recent episode, for example, he held a meeting with his employees to introduce a new office dress plan. He came in the room dressed in a “sweat suit” and proceeded to put up pictures of jobs that hurt in an effort to demonstrate the perils of overworking. But to be a truly bad boss, a promoter must also be evil. One that first, there’s no finer example than the *Doerry Howard* boss from the *Delbert* comic strip. Completely clueless, yet up to speed on the latest on-line corporate buzzwords, he’s every employer’s worst nightmare. *Doerry* center Scott Adams describes him, “He wasn’t born cruel and unscrupulous, he worked hard at it.” It’s always a mystery how such bosses climb to their exalted posts, but Haught has a theory. “The more money you get, the less you keep your skills up, the less employable you are elsewhere, the more likely you are to be held to the dark side,” she says.

**The Cult Maker** Haught says this is the most insidious type of bad boss. These bosses want to be worshiped and surround themselves with fawning yes-men. Worse still, they gossip and gang up on dissenting employees to make their lives hellish. Think of the cult of personality that surrounded former Enron CEO Jeffrey Skilling. After Skilling’s fall, Enron’s vice president of corporate development, who was leading internal efforts warning the company could implode, she was reportedly made to feel like an outcast.

Some say you can fight bad bosses by taking lots of notes and by keeping a record of everything your supervisor does. But that will likely only delay an inevitable choice: get up with your evil boss, or get out. “When you end up doing it, it can be a deeply frustrating and lonely experience. It’s often hard to get a raise, even your friends and family, to believe what you’re telling them about your boss because they can’t understand how someone could become a boss and do things that are bad for the organization,” says Haught. “For these people it can feel like they’re on a little island all by themselves.” But if it’s any consolation, Haught says there’s a surprising number of terrible bosses out there—so you’re definitely not alone. ■

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## THE 'CULT MAKER' BOSS SURROUNDS HIMSELF WITH YES-MEN AND GANGS UP ON ANY DISSENTING EMPLOYEES



them,” she says. These bosses are often ruthless, like Miranda Priestly, the magazine editor who terrorized her employees in the 2006 film *The Devil Wears Prada*. The character was loosely based on real-life *Vogue* editor Anna Wintour. Suppressor bosses demand respect and subservience, says Haught, and working for one often makes you feel invisible.

BARRY WITKOWSKI/ANIMATED COLLECTION; JOHN HARTILL/GETTY IMAGES; JEFFREY SKILLING/ENRON



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# WHY YOU WON'T GET DAYCARE

**Workers want on-site daycare, so why don't more firms offer it?**

**BY CHARLIE GILLIS** • The twin pressures of work and parenthood descend on Sara Benham every weekday at 7:30 a.m. when she drops off her daughter Stacie at a local day home. With her two-year-old in tow, she heads to the north end of her Toronto neighborhood to a daily morning at her workplace north of the city—a hair-cuts, nail-bite, manicure and skin-care business, a franchising manager for a commercial bakery, to punch the attendance at every break in traffic. “I have to take them by 9 a.m.,” she says. “At some point every day, I’m going into lunch.”

Benham knows better than to expect any help from her employer. In a sector where

people routinely work 90-hour weeks, the time-honored separation of work and family remains an ineluctable rule. So when her supervisor raised the topic of child care during her job interview, she knew it wasn’t out of the question. “The question was whether I had the resources in place to juggle these demands,” she says, with the market for skilled workers at a premium. Benham wonders at times why better arrangements aren’t available to the growing number of working parents like her.

It’s an enduring curiosity. We’re in the midst of one of the tightest labour markets in Canadian history, while daycare spaces are so scarce the federal government is offering a 25 per cent tax credit to companies that create new ones. Yet only 10 of the many enlightened employers to make this year’s Top 100 offer some form of child care assistance, financial or otherwise, and only nine

SARA BENHAM has a hair-raising commute from the day home to work in the morning, but on-site daycare at which their employer can receive priority. A recent survey of employers by the Canadian Payroll Association was even more stark, noting child care died last among benefits provided, with only two per cent of employers offering it. You would think this up to a reluctant strong organization when it comes to involvement in their workers’ home lives. But it’s not as if they haven’t entered the private sphere in other ways, providing everything from crisis counseling to days when employees are allowed to bring pets to work. If you didn’t know better, you’d think they were afraid of kids.

This reluctance seems all the stronger when you consider the rewards for lending a helping hand. As far back as the early 1980s, companies like the National Bank of Canada were moving aggressively into child care, setting up what would become a chain of daycares around its headquarters in downtown Montreal. Though not in this year’s Top 100, the bank has received laurels in federal government labour reports for its progressive attitude toward the issue, and a few other organizations have followed suit. KPMG, the Toronto-based accounting and management consultancy, provides a parent subsidy that employees can use for elder care or child care. UConn, the Montreal-based maker of urinary prostheses, McGill University, Toronto’s University Health Network—all count among the Top 100 organizations that have earned this apparently forbidding laurel. Most are pleased to list the benefits of their move in their reports or recruitment literature.

Why, then, don’t more Canadian employers take the plunge? In part, says Ken Davies, founder of Calgary-based Lantana Management Consultants, because the economics of employer-funded child care fit neither their nor their workers. On-site daycares don’t work for large firms—imposed or numerous branch offices, notes Davies, whose clients often ask which perks they should offer, while simply shelving money toward child care doesn’t make sense for every parent. A lot of workers prefer to leave their pre-school children with family members, part-time nannies or church-run child care facilities, which cut into the pool of employees who would use the service. “I could see it working with a hospital or other large public institution where employees come to a central location, but if you’re doing people in 196 locations with 160 or even 500 people, it gets a lot harder.”

Then there’s the cost of setting up proper facilities. To guard against legal liability, employers would be expected to have early top-notch daycare, or consultation child

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PHOTOGRAPH BY TONYA K. BLOOM



parents can cut time to run side businesses, says Gordon Cleveland, a University of Toronto professor who has studied the economics of daycare in Canada. "If you're a corporation that doesn't want to lower its operating costs by providing poor quality care, you're taking between \$15,000 and \$20,000 per child for infant care," he says. Those costs decline as the kids get older, Cleveland acknowledges, but even then companies run the added risk of offering resentment among workers who

complain. So if four bosses can't see the extra effort we've been making for them, maybe it's because we haven't been talking them. "We're not in it for the love, this is money as much as a cost—no least to employers. Chronic absenteeism costs between \$5 billion and \$15 billion per year out of the economy, according to numerous studies, with parental day care high on the list of reasons people miss work. Indeed, the federal study noted that workers who admit family issues interfere

to be academic with young children," she explains. "We're asking them to relocate here, in some cases from the U.S. or overseas, leaving behind family and other support networks in those countries. They certainly want to stay as close as to what's going to happen with their children." In some cases, the university was trying to pry smart young Europeans away from generous government daycare programs, in a sense, they were competing with U.S. colleges that offer child-care assistance on a rote style-as-a-kind-of-opportunistic. Either way, the incentive quickly became an essential tool for recruitment, and keeping it current stable of scholars happy.

The questions whether more major employers will follow suit, and Davies, for one, doubts it. Daycare is simply too expensive to make

## Three times as many Canadians give priority to their work over their family as vice versa

don't happen to have children. "If you're subsidizing a fully, that's at least \$15,000 because you're not providing to your own employees."

And while the benefits of providing child care might add up when calculated on a countrywide basis, they would look less impressive on an individual firm's bottom line, Cleveland says. They aren't broadly, to society as a whole. They go partly to the children, partly to the parents, partly to the employer, partly to this, partly to that. But to any particular employer, the benefits are not bigger than the cost.

Still, working moms and dads could be forgiven for thinking they deserve a bit of payback, because they've long shouldered their level ones to meet their obligations on the job. According to a landmark study prepared for the federal Department of Human Resources in 2001, one in four Canadians report that their work responsibilities interfere with those at home, and those with child care responsibilities are almost twice as likely to report that sort of conflict. But they bend over backwards to prevent the opposite, scrambling to keep home-life pressures from interfering with their jobs. That tension is why Canadian governments to work over family as vice versa, according to the federal study, which was led by Linda Deshay of Carleton University, the country's leading expert on work-life balance. Fully 67 per cent deem work and family to be separate domains that shouldn't mix. The numbers paint a picture of a make-up workplace culture in which even successful employers are



COMPANIES find the benefits of on-site daycare go to society as a whole, rather than just to the firm itself.

with their jobs are seven times more likely to claim days off for child care than their more well-adjusted colleagues, a figure that prompted them to recommend employers offer child care and elder care services five years back, it's finally starting to happen, but only among the large, well-studied employers Davies describes.

In these cases, competition for skilled employees at their prime appears to be the driver. At the University of Alberta, 110 of the school's 2,000 academic staff have taken up the offer of a \$2,000 per year daycare subsidy for each child, many of them applying the cash to fees at one of the school's five on-site daycares. Mikaela Guenow, U of A manager of the on-site work-life services, says the incentive became necessary at the school began cutting further aid for academic staff. "The people we're trying to attract tend

to be a worthwhile investment for companies. For the small and medium sized firms that employ half the workers in the country, the senior spouse has been to provide flexible work hours, allow staff to work from home or augment maternity and paternity leave benefits. "Employees want the worker to be happy and whole," he says. "I feel I don't think many would want to run a daycare on top of what they don't have to." All of which means work over family benefits must soldier on at least until their children are old enough to attend school. It's an arrangement that, much as the Bluebird caregiver, Brazilian from a good for mother herself and her daughter, "Sister" did for 10 hours a day before she got picked up," she says ruefully. "Sometimes I think it's amazing that I don't have a job that allows her to spend less time there. But I have to accept it for now. It's a shame."

PHOTOGRAPH BY JONAS LAM

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# DIVERSITY OR DEATH

Some firms are slowly realizing they'll need minorities to survive

**BY RACHAEL MENDLESON** • When Vikram Ahluwalia immigrated to Canada four years ago, he couldn't figure out why he wasn't getting any job offers. In India, he had spent the better part of his decade working his way up to middle management at a multinational packaged goods company, so he knew he was more than qualified to fill the positions he applied to in Canada. But he wasn't getting past the interviews. Finally, a headhunter told him what was turning prospective employers off: his turban and his beard. Though it was an emotionally difficult decision, Ahluwalia



is a Sikh—he took her advice and removed his turban and trimmed his beard. “I could see the impact right away,” he says. “With his words, I had two major offers.” Canadian corporations are not nearly so advanced as we like to think they are when it comes to workplace diversity. But that's changing quickly. Not because executives are particularly broad-minded or sensitive to discrimination, but because they're finding that the very nature of their business now depends on hiring immigrants. Currently, one fifth of our country's workers are immigrants, and by 2021, it's estimated that new Canadians will account for all our labour force growth. In industries where the labour market is particularly tight, such as the advertising sector, immigrants already account for almost all growth. While other generalists of new Canadians complained of underemployment, that later was of highly skilled immigrants is finding that in many sectors, they have plenty of options to choose from. In such a market, if they get the impression that your firm doesn't welcome their culture or religious beliefs, they'll simply look elsewhere. The shift is “quite dramatic,” says Joerg Dietz, an international business professor at the Richard Ivey School of Business. “If you don't start working on diversity management today, you might not be around tomorrow.”



contracting and retaining immigrants is “a real barrier” for Wheddy Engineering Inc., says vice-president of human resources James Popel. The multinational engineering consulting firm has more than doubled its staff in the past five years, and is looking to boost numbers by now hiring 25 per cent new jobs, but he says “there isn't enough applicants out there to fill all the roles.” To meet its needs, the Winnipeg-based company recruits from agencies that assist immigrants with their job search. It also facilitates the accommodation of lower education-levelled engineers, and provides on-site English language instruction and

cross-cultural training. At its Parkview, Ont., office, there's a dedicated prayer facility that was created at the behest of employees. If similar spaces are requested elsewhere, says Popel, “we'll adjust.” For companies that are only now waking up to the need to reach out to a more diverse pool of employees, the learning curve will be steep, says Peter Sharma, president of Multicultural Diversity Solutions Ltd. Sharma says the first step was cultural integration. Now, he assists businesses with what he calls “Diversity 2.0,” which is more about accommodating religion. “Where many older workers may not bring [religion] forward, many younger workers know that if they're not treated in a certain fashion, they can go somewhere else,” he says. Just ask Ah, a Winnipeg-born Muslim who markets a specialized medical device for a company located on the outskirts of Toronto. The 21-year-old, who requested anonymity, recently wanted leading for a new job, largely because he says he feels “alienated” at work. Although his daily prayers take “for less time than a cigarette break,” there's an appropriate space, and taking time out to drive to a nearby mosque has

your organization has to work toward achieving that strategic imperative,” says Dietz. About three years ago, TD Bank Financial Group realized it had to make a concerted effort to “weaved diversity into the fabric of the organization,” says Bill Hatanaka, CEO of TD Warehouse Canada and chair of the diversity leadership council. TD aimed its approach at the Chinese, South Asian, Korean and black populations, and has since conducted numerous surveys with these groups to measure its performance. The bank offers individual and group mentoring, has constructed quiet rooms in several locations, and last year partnered with Ryerson University to solicit its immigrants to the Canadian workforce. By the end of October, almost all of the bank's executives and half of its managers will have undergone diversity training.

Measuring the impact of diversity strategies on the bottom line is difficult. “It's an organiza-



If Muslim workers have no place to pray, they could leave

tional design effort,” says Dietz. “You can't put a dollar figure to it.” Although the corporation, Ahluwalia's former employer, wasn't able to quantify the effect of their efforts, they were quite firm about what they stood to lose if they didn't continue to increase diversity. “There's a cost to not taking this seriously,” says Andrea York, a partner at Blake, Cassels

& Goyden. York, who co-chairs the firm's diversity and equity committee, says, “Our clients are expecting us to put forward a diverse team.” Says Hatanaka, “You have to make sure that your organization can also time to be relevant. Those organizations that do not have a diversity initiative will, over time, be relegated to the scrap heap.” It's true that there are still many companies that can find all the skilled workers needed without implementing a diversity program, but if management practices keep changing, in the meantime, companies that continue to shirk off the importance of embracing immigrants and minorities may be driving valuable employees away. Since Ahluwalia started working in Canada's consumer packaged goods industry, he says he has come across just one turbaned Sikh. “A lot of companies talk about diversity, but I think it's just lip service,” he says. The 14-year-old has chosen to keep his hair short, because he was the long, traditional Sikh beard as a “hindrance” in his ability to get ahead. “But sometimes you get on the media of the night and look in the mirror, and I don't recognize myself,” he says. Ahluwalia is now considering moving to work in the U.S., where he hopes he'll feel more accepted—whether he wears his turban or not. ■

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## Why college grads get jobs

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Simulated learning technology is one of the most fruitful ways to learn complex skills, and Canada's colleges and institutes are employing it — and in some cases developing it — to teach everything from captaining ships to running a warehouse.

is used to train deck and engineering officers. As a unit of the Marine Institute, the CIMS has a total of 11 specialized simulation facilities that qualify as the most comprehensive and complex marine simulation equipment in North America.

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particular vessel and tanning it into math data for input on our simulators. The result is, as we say, any ship, anywhere."

**C**reating simulation programs for the Department of National Defence is an option for post graduate students with a diploma or degree in related technology fields such as animation and 3D or graphic design through a one-year internship program at the Miramichi campus of the New Brunswick Community College. The program, which accepts 50 students annually, offers full-time paid employment – \$28,000 while in the program – at the Gagetown, N.B., base in collaboration with an academic component.

"This is a great opportunity to work and learn using the latest technology in simulation modelling," says Heather Fowler, the applied arts department head. "There is a wide range of programs to develop, from creating models to train troops on

**Research from Europe demonstrates that nursing students who train in simulated labs are more confident when they enter the clinical environment.**



the latest equipment, to interactive war games, to creating virtual environments to eliminate culture shock when troops land in unfamiliar terrain – for example, in Afghanistan."

Simulators can even imitate people. Nursing students learn from human patient simulators at several colleges, including Alberta's Lethbridge College and Algonquin College in Ottawa. The simulators look like real people and have simulated body functions: they breathe, bleed and have a pulse; their bodies make heart, lung and bowel sounds that can be detected with stethoscopes; they even talk and groan via a remote operator who takes on the role of the patient from behind an observation window.

"The simulated learning environment gives students more complex and challenging experiences than they are likely to have in a clinical practicum where real people are at risk," says Peter Ladane, vice president academic and chief learning officer at Lethbridge College. "It also prepares them for the clinical environment, which remains a valuable part of the nursing program."

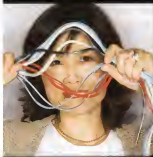
Student experiences in the simulation lab become surprisingly "real" very quickly, according to Ladane. "Things can change very fast in these simulators and the students are under considerable pressure. They usually forget that it is a simulation."

Simulation labs are video-taped, giving student an opportunity to debrief with their instructors and take away a video record of their experience. The debriefing is valuable because "teaching moments" can be identified and addressed in a more systematic manner than they usually are in an actual clinical situation, notes Dr. Barbara Foulds, associate dean of health and chair of nursing studies at Algonquin College. "In a busy hospital setting, it is often impossible for the instructor to hark back to a situation that took place several hours before and review specific actions in detail. With the video review, one can hit the 'pause' button and point out mistakes. The technology enhances our role as educators and really engages the learner."

Research from Europe demonstrates that nursing students who train in simulated labs are more confident when they enter the clinical environment. And while simulated nursing training won't replace clinical practice, Foulds envisions the day when it will be mandatory for students to demonstrate a certain level of skill and knowledge within the simulation lab before they work with actual patients.

"In simulation labs, we know for certain that students will experience certain situations, whereas in the clinical setting it's hit and miss."

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## FUN, GAMES AND AWARDS: SHERIDAN NEW MEDIA GRAD HAS IT ALL

Does anyone have more fun at work than Evan Jones? The owner and creative director/producer at Stitch Media, an interactive media production company with offices in Halifax and Toronto, has the amazing job of coming up with ideas for cross promotions with traditional media creators. Says Jones: "I work with traditional media creators to make their projects interactive."

A recent project in association with White Pine Pictures, known as The Border Interactive, won a Rookie Award from the Banff World Television Festival for Best Interactive Mobile Program Enhancement, while being nominated for a 2008 Gemini Award for Best Cross Platform Project.

No stranger to awards, Jones, a former creative director for Xosiphile Media, led the McGoness Extended Reality Game, a groundbreaking

"We were given all the tools and full access to the lab day and night." - Evan Jones

integration of interactive television that won an International Emmy Award, a Gemini and a Banff World Television Award. And back in 2003, when he graduated from the interactive multimedia program at Sheridan College, he won the Graduate of the Year Award from the Canadian New Media Awards. Not a bad track record.

The Sheridan experience was "unbelievably challenging," says Jones. "We were given all the tools and full access to the lab day and night. In many ways, the program was more challenging than some of the university level courses that I had taken."

Working with other talented and motivated students acted as a stimulus to Jones. "We were all in this crucible where being exposed to one another's work helped us to thrive. The course demanded 100% of my time and energy, but it was well worth it."

Jones went on to do a six-month program at the Canadian Film Centre, from which he jumped into the world of work and then self-employment. He credits the Sheridan program with giving him practical knowledge. "The combination of theory and practice gave me a lot of confidence. That is especially important for me today because my job demands that I think of ways to do things differently in the tech space. That's what makes my job so much fun - I constantly get to invent," he says, laughing at the sheer excitement of it all.

His work having been named one of the Top 10 New Media Groundbreakers in 2007 by the Bell Broadcast and New Media Fund, it seems Jones will continue to make his mark in the new media space.

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"There is a labour and skills shortage and they are connected... We expect that the shortage will soon be seen in all provinces throughout the year." - Randy Williams

**K**elly adds that the combination of the skilled labour shortage and the fact that the economy is doing well makes for good employment prospects for college graduates. "And programs are most often created in areas where there is strong labour market demand, so graduates are able to easily plug into those opportunities."

Many observers believe the labour market will tighten even further. The tourism industry currently employs one in ten Canadians, and according to Randy Williams, president and CEO of the Tourism Industry Association of Canada, his sector will be short by 340,000 full-time employees by 2020.

"There is a labour and a skills shortage and they are connected. The problem is

most prevalent now in B.C. and Alberta, where it exists throughout the year, with most other provinces experiencing the shortage in the high summer season. We expect that the shortage will soon be seen in all provinces throughout the year. This is the tip of the iceberg and it will worsen before it gets better."

Most colleges have tourism programs that are critically important to the industry. "The best students are being hired even before they graduate and those wanting to make a career in this industry do quite well," says Williams. "But some colleges have to turn away tourism students because of lack of classroom space or equipment."

A 2008 ACCC study of needs showed that heavy oversubscription of courses is the

norm. The reports says: "Forty programs in one institution are oversubscribed, while another reported that most of its programs fell into this category. The ratio of qualified applicants to spaces varies by program from 2 to 1 as high as 18 to 1 for some health science programs."

The railway industry, also caught in the skills crisis crunch, has the opposite problem: under-subscription to its college programs. "We went through a couple of decades of significant downsizing, so from a recruitment perspective we were off the radar," explains Bruce Burrows, vice-president of public and corporate affairs for the Railway Association of Canada. "But now that we're growing, many people aren't aware that we need skilled employees to fill well-paying positions and that there are college programs for conductors. We're working with the colleges, the government and high school counsellors on recruitment activities."

Burrows says his industry will likely hire 11,800 people by 2012. "We're most concerned about replacing conductors and locomotive engineers who are due to retire. This year we graduated 175 conductors from participating colleges and we hope to grow this to 400 annually, which still won't be enough. While we hire off the street, we do find that the college grads have better retention rates and safety results. Everyone who graduates from a college program will almost certainly be hired."

A lot is at stake. If bread-and-butter industries such as railways, construction and tourism can't get enough employees, businesses will not thrive. "We need the country to be competitive from a skills perspective going forward," says Burrows. "At the very least, people who are retiring must be replaced."

"Only by expanding the capacity of public colleges will there be an adequate supply of highly skilled graduates to sustain the needs of public- and private-sector employers. By any measure, this simple truth is the preeminent requirement for Canada's future economic success." - James Knight

**P**aul Charvett observes an imbalance in investment by the federal government in post-secondary education. "In the last 10 years the federal government has provided \$8 billion in funding to the university system while the college system has received around \$1 billion. Colleges and institutes have been largely ignored - their infrastructure hasn't expanded to keep pace with demand."

In some cases industry has stepped in to help fund or create programs that turn out skilled employees. Is this a good model for college expansion? "It

is appropriate that industries rely on the government to create an education system that will develop skilled employees," says Charvett. He says that while education is under provincial jurisdiction, the federal government should take the lead by funding expansion of college capacity, upgrading and replacement of equipment, and programs to give under-represented groups such as disadvantaged youth and women a college education in construction-related programs.

What might that cost? ACCC research shows that if Canada's colleges and institutes of technology are to produce

enough graduates to satisfy the current shortage of advanced skills, \$7.4 billion is required now for infrastructure upgrading, facility expansion and teaching equipment.

All levels of government will need to respond, says James Knight. "Only by expanding the capacity of public colleges will there be an adequate supply of highly skilled graduates to sustain the needs of public- and private-sector employers. By any measure, this simple truth is the preeminent requirement for Canada's future economic success."

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# WHO REVIVED THE ELECTRIC CAR?

The auto industry  
faces its biggest  
changes in 100 years

BY CHARLIE GILLIE • It must have been hard not to gloat. Chris Pease—former GM exec, now gadfly to the lumbering beast of the U.S. auto industry—was bringin' out a panel as a special guest of General Motors Corp., sharing thoughts on the future of transportation. Pease's 2006 documentary *Who Killed the Electric Car?* had made him a hero company of GM, which is what happens when you suggest a company has conspired with government and Big Oil to screw its own product. Yet here was GM, flying Pease out to Detroit three weeks ago to witness the unveiling of—yes, guess it—another electric car. At a symposium afterward, industry types who not long ago vilified him as a purveyor of truth lowered voices as he posed judgments on their efforts to reinvent themselves. "If they're reaching out to people like me," the Eisenhower concluded, "they must be getting serious."

In the last 100 months, such speeches have become a norm in the auto industry, a look-  
ing-glass world where environmentalists new

stand shoulder to shoulder with Big Three executives, and the head of General Motors openly mopes about the deconstruction of the U.S. auto floor. Words are cheap, of course. But these ones point to the carmakers doing something we never thought they would: denigrating themselves from oil—and recently the carmakers have backed the talk with action. Two weeks after GM unveiled the production model of the Chevy Volt, an electric car equipped with a gasoline generator to recharge its batteries, Chrysler announced the auto world by introducing three electric-powered vehicles it developed in secret. The cars are projected for sale in 2010, which will put them on par with both the Volt and a plug-in electric car Nissan Motor Corp. plans to test market within two years.

And those are just the electric cars. Toyota is working on a plug-in version of the Prius that after a full charge would allow drivers to go 10 km while using scarcely a drop of gas. Ford is road testing its Europe plug-in hybrid as we speak. Honda's just got its hydrogen fuel-cell car approved for sale by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency—an industry first—and a last hurdle before the car goes to market.

SACRED FABLE powers with an electric car: "If they reach out to me, they must be serious!"

For people like Pease, it's all a little dizzying. "I don't trust car companies as a rule," he told the liberal radio network *NPR* recently. "But they're certainly making it look very real." As recently as two years ago, GM was said to dis its previous electric car, the EV1, was not commercially viable, now it's staking its future on similar technology. Chrysler entered out its three electric prototypes in one-quarter the time it usually takes to develop a new model, raising questions about whether it is truly ready to join what increasingly resembles an arms race.

Then again, fear has a way of clarifying the mind, and if one GM executive compared the Volt to "a moon shot," it's because Detroit is in desperate need of a success. According to some estimates, half of the cars sold in the world by 2030 will run on something other than gasoline. And fuel-saving alternatives are already the fastest growing segment of the market, with sales of hybrids, including plug-ins, projected to climb to 2.5 million by 2015, from 500,000 in 2007. Yet the Big Three have allowed their Japanese competitors to dominate the field in recent years, with Toyota doubling more than half of the U.S. hybrid market last year.

Whether Detroit's Hall Mays will close the gap is unclear. Consumers may rightly wonder whether they should consent to a vehicle developed in less time than it takes to age a decent bottle of wine. And when it comes to the cost, what if the price of fuel goes back down? Sure, a car like the Volt costs one-fourth what it takes to drive an average car. But its projected \$30,000 price tag may drive a lot of middle-class buyers back toward fuel-efficient gas models.

With so many obstacles still ahead, drivers shouldn't expect the Big Three to turn on a dime, says Dave Calk, chairman of the Center for Automotive Research in Ann Arbor, Mich. "This is going to be incremental," he cautions. "These companies will start by selling 40,000 models, then 100,000 and so on." Still, Calk can't wait to overlook the psychology behind the industry's new quest. As long as, companies are ready to part company with the internal combustion engine, he says, with implications for practically everyone on the planet. "We're at the threshold of the biggest change in 100 years of the auto industry."

GETTING TO THIS POINT has not been easy. Back in the early 1990s, when investors were trying everything from batteries to coal to propel their bigges-down-the-road, the internal combustion engine was still a brilliant solution, and with oil as plentiful as it was,

Photo by [unreadable]





PARADIGM SHIFT: It's taken exactly a century since Ford's first Model T for electric cars to beat gasoline's supremacy

fuel efficiency remained a non-issue for the next seven decades. Given the CPEC check of 1975 failed to get Detroit interested in electric cars, the fact is that, until Toyota came that decade less gas-fueled North America, forcing Detroit to admit capitulation.

Only the debate over global warming in the 1990s, with its spate of carbon emissions lawsuits, turned the tide, and it was during this period that the Volt's ancestor, the EV1, gave form to the modern dream of a zero-emissions vehicle. Starting in 1996, GM made the car a California-only lease-only loan, sending a flutter through the Hollywood elite: George Clooney leased one, and so did Clinton Davis. But there was a problem: the car could only go about 120 km after a 21-hour charge, which put GM in the position of trying to sell a vehicle that could get you there, but not necessarily home. So in 2000 the company decided to go back to the drawing board, informing the original 600 lessees they would not be allowed to purchase their EV1s and—in a particularly nasty final gesture—crushing the last specimens of the car at a facility in Arizona. That auspicious be-

ing story became the center piece of Ford's film, with spawning a host of adjacent conspiracy theories (the company still finds itself being hounded for the car because it was "too reliable" and therefore likely to cut into its aftermarket maintenance revenues).

In the big picture, though, the death of the EV1 didn't much matter. By then, Toyota and Honda were building early versions of their gas-electric hybrids, which attracted enough socially conscious buyers that the big

we're going to subsidize your purchase." A second thing too, considering the boom-spending days of developing, manufacturing and marketing an alternative power vehicle GM took more than a billion into the EV1, and while executives are tight-lipped about development budgets for the current vehicles, it's safe to assume they too approach 1 billion units. Nowhere is the pressure on car companies more evident than at Chrysler, where electric-car engineers crunched the normal four-year process of developing new models into an all-out sprint of 18 months. Now the end work of parts procurement, materials and assembly begins, says Doug Quigley, an executive in charge of Chrysler's electric car group. "It's as if we've just finished running a log race, then someone fired a gas

enrol of the business world open, says Jason Rutkowski, an expert who has studied the parts network that keeps the automobile running. He points to the lithium-ion batteries expected to power the plug-in electric. While car assembly remains centered in the U.S. Rust Belt, lithium-ion was developed in Silicon Valley to power cellphones and camcorders, so that may prove the most logical place to make them. "At this point, we don't know whether that's a good place for Michigan, California, or Canada or for Asia," he says. "The assumption is it will develop the supply chain quite dramatically. There will be major winners and losers."

Already a kind of gold-rush era may be under hold, as myriad suppliers pop up in hopes of snagging auto-friendly auto-makers

where Prime spoke, long time ago to analyst Jolter Canzani worried about the ability of the Big Three to make themselves over amid a struggling economy—not to mention the toughest competitive environment in their collective history. "They have to do battle with the Toyotas and Hondas, and that's just to get through today," said Canzani, a consultant who guides investors on auto-related businesses. Given the Japanese make car "head start on hybrid technology, throwing themselves into car cars may prove crippling. "Honestly, I don't know if all of them in the next six months will be able to stand as independent companies."

One of the biggest challenges will be choosing which technology to bet on, says Rutkowski. Many experts believe the next decade

have been plowing money into electric car start-ups, leading some analysts to wonder whether Silicon Valley might in fact become an automotive center in the clean-car era. Last June, Tesla Motors Inc. opened up a showroom in Los Angeles to market its all-electric sports car, drawing admiring press from around the world. Few seemed off by the vehicle's \$109,000 price tag. For up enough buzz, observers reasoned, and the demand for cheaper models will follow.

The good news is all this is that consumers are in a jam, be it a tractor price, choice of energy source or the pesky problem of clearing out an highway across the continent. "Whoever breaks, we're about to witness a level of drama unseen in the industry since Henry Ford mass-produced the Model T—the all-

## THE ELECTRIC CAR ENGINEERS CRAMMED FOUR YEARS OF DEVELOPMENT INTO ONE

Three automakers were forced to march. Ford was experimenting with hydrogen-fueled cells and producing gas turbines that could also burn ethanol. GM, meanwhile, was putting lessons from its experience with the EV1 to work. Now lithium-ion batteries offered the prospect of cheaper, more efficient power packs, while the true breakthrough came during long discussions around the EV1's size. David Plotz, vice president of corporate and environmental affairs for GM Canada, "The engineers had been making motorcycle-sized with generators and then they didn't have to stop to recharge," he says. "At some point, somebody asked, why not put the generator on board the car?"

In short, the mainstream necessary to get electric cars on the road was more at least as plain by the time GM started a small-scale version of the Volt in 2009. GM's own engineers had their own psychological barrier, they created last April when it surprised \$100 a barrel oil spiked their 30 weeks. By August, sales of light trucks in North America, including large SUVs, had plunged nearly 18 per cent from the same period last year—a decline of 1.35 million vehicles. That meant maybe have the automakers into a panic, but Working too not associated with a whopping \$25-billion loan package meant to create the new technology will be affordable to average buyers. At GM chairman Rick Wagoner put it as a congressional hearing. "The good news is

and said, "Now you officially start." Building a car from the ground up was never an option, Quigley adds, given GM's mobile head start. So he took a more streamlined approach, adapting plug-in electric to the company's existing models. The result is three distinctive models, each wearing a different Chrysler brand and each aimed at a specific market. There's a Jeep Wrangler for yuppies still attached to their SUVs, a two-seater Dodge sports car for the young and young-at-heart, and a Chrysler minivan for suburban families. Like the Volt, the van and SUV will run on batteries fueled by a gasoline motor for recharging on the fly with a range of about 36 km on a full charge (the two-seater will have a battery range of about 160 km).

The numbers look cozy, and Quigley's speech confidently hints Chrysler's ability to "pull ahead of everyone in the pack." But it's going to be a battle. Last week, GM announced plans to build a \$1.4-billion plant in Flint, Mich., to build the Volt. Showing part of its program that advanced. And while there had previously been focused on recharging technology to improve fuel economy, it too is getting interested in electricity. In a recent speech, executive vice president Mark Fields outlined about the performance of the plug-in version of its Escape Hybrid ("120 miles per gallon over a first 30 miles" after a full charge) while noting the company was plowing two-thirds of its R&D budget—nearly \$4.7 billion—annually—into fuel-saving technology.

IT'S AN UNPRECEDENTED spending spree, which has the potential to break the supply



BUZZ: GM's Volt in Detroit. Left, and Tesla's sleek electric sports car. Cheaper models will follow the demand

for smaller products. Last year, project leaders like Quigley had three battery suppliers to choose from. Now they have 13. Conversely, a no-seller's market for electric engineers, as the Big Three scramble over larger units to displace and out-thrust products like GM's, program director for the Volt at GM headquarters, can't even ballpark the number of engineers he has working on the project. "It's certainly in the hundreds," he says. "But we have people all over the world working on this program."

And as with all spending sprees, the specter of disaster never fades. At the same panel

will see the market splinter almost equally between electric cars, hybrids, ethanol-burners, and fuel cell vehicles and fuel cell gas models. That puts individual executives in the position of gambling big on one technology, trying to keep pace as several. "But they just don't have the resources to be the market leaders in all of them," he says.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, established automakers will need to be on close watch for interlopers, some of whom have been experimenting with electric transport a lot longer than they have. In the last few years, venture capitalists in California

cut race to cash in on road transportation's second great invention. Which may explain why there has planned a sequel to his film, tentatively titled the *Knave of the Electric Car*. A thoughtful plot is easy to predict: mutants of vehicle come back to life, makes its killers pay the price. GM might not be fleeing from the ending. But hey, they're in Detroit, not Hollywood. ■

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# GOING TO WORK ON SMART DRUGS

**Will employers pressure staff to take brain boosters?**

**BY JASON EISEY** • While most people start their day with a cup of coffee, Jeremy Cole, an operations manager at an internet company in Denver, Colo., ingests a little white pill called *modafinil*. For those with debilitating sleep disorders such as narcolepsy, which can cause individuals to pass out at all hours of the day, the drug's energizing qualities offer a ray of hope for a normal life. But the thing is, Cole doesn't suffer from narcolepsy. Instead, he's part of a growing throng of otherwise healthy individuals popping high-powered pharmaceuticals to add some zing to their grey matter. "It's not like coffee, it doesn't make you feel buzzed or amped up," says Cole, who began to take the drug to months ago. "It's as if a fog had been lifted off your brain."

By now, many have heard the stories of university students popping *Modafinil* to help them cram for exams. But in recent months

there have been signs the phenomenon has spread to scientists, academics and even office workers. This past spring the journal *Nature* conducted an informal survey of its readers to gauge how many of them have used so-called smart drugs. The survey found that one in five respondents had turned to glimmer-enhancers to enhance their concentration, focus and memory. Then, in July, a popular technology blog called one *Modafinil* prodigal (the blog name was for *modafinil*) to be the "most powerful drug of choice." The blog caters to executives and startup tech companies who rely on it to keep them energized through 20-hour workdays.

Now a recent edition of *When the Times Praises* (in last month's issue of the *Journal of Medical Ethics*) wrote that some employers may soon pressure managers to take brain boosters as a way to improve their performance. The report says legislation is already needed to protect workers' rights before the pressure of healthy people using smart drugs becomes more common. "It's a strange upsurge of individual autonomy and I think people should be able to enhance themselves

all they want," Dr. Judith Appel, a bioethics lecturer at Brown University in Rhode Island and the report's author, told *Business Week*. "But my concern is that employers will try to compel individuals to do that."

It's hard to know exactly how many healthy adults are taking their boosters. Anecdotal evidence on the Internet suggests an underground subculture of taking, though not unlike what occurred in the early days of steroid use in bodybuilding. In online forums devoted to cognitive enhancement, participants shy away from pharmaceuticals because the same way other people swap cocktail recipes. Except in this case, the ingredients are some of the most powerful compounds on the market, approved to treat not just narcolepsy and attention deficit disorder, but also Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's and depression.

What would lead healthy people to experiment with drugs originally designed to treat serious ailments? A number of factors are at work, say experts. In some cases, it's as simple as trying to cope with long work hours or jet lag. But there's also a sector among

many of those seeking cognitive enhancement that isn't marked just as not out to get it, as it is a computer all day, working numbers and updating spreadsheets. "A lot of engineers are more or less about doing to undo the modern world rather than the African savannah where our ancestors roamed," says Andrew Sandberg, a research fellow at Oxford University's Future of Humanity Institute. "Cognitive enhancement drugs are going to involve trade-offs with exclusion."

At the same time, a greying population means some people are on the hunt for ways to keep their mental faculties sharp. While modern medicine has extended the best-before date of the human body, the same can't be said for the brain. That's a problem for the millions of baby boomers who plan to continue working well into old age. The point was driven home earlier this year when the U.S. military put out a call for companies to develop a smart drug that could keep its aging soldiers in fighting form, both physically and mentally. Such a drug would also have huge commercial potential. "The world contains approximately a billion people over the age of 20," the U.S. Army noted in its call for bids. "Even a small enhancement of cognitive capacity in these individuals would probably have an impact on the world economy rivaling that of the Internet."

In the meantime, there's no shortage of people willing to experiment with existing pharmaceuticals. One poster on an online forum recently boasted that by mixing *deprex*, a drug developed for Parkinson's and cataplexy, and, indeed, a hyperextension exercise, he was able to give speeches and presentations better than ever before. "Like like that scientist Zelig Lynch, associate director of the Neurotechnology Industry Organization, which represents neuroscience companies. "People need to realize these drugs haven't been clinically tested on healthy individuals," he says. "It could be that seasonal effects don't show up until 10 years down the road."

Part of the problem is that there is no regulatory process for the study and approval of cognitive enhancement drugs among healthy individuals. Health agencies in Canada and the U.S., for instance, require that drugs target a specific illness, and, ideally, they're tested in groups of patients. As a drug is approved to treat a neurological disease or disorder, though, doctors are then free to prescribe it "off-label" to treat other ailments. This was how Coke elevated his *modafinil*. After opening a pair of new research labs, the drug online to ensure it was safe, he says he found a local doctor who prescribed the drug to treat "working-related somnolence."

By some estimates, 30 per cent of all prescriptions in the U.S. are now off-label. For some alarming is the legal trade in black-market pharmaceuticals over the Internet. In cases where it's impossible to get doctors to fill one's off-label prescriptions, many are simply ordering the high-powered drugs online from companies in Europe and India, who ship right to the front door. It's a black-market trade that experts expect will only increase.

Aside from the health risks, many critics are opposed to cognitive enhancement on a more fundamental level. Some argue that once smart drugs come with hefty price tags,

Coke has found all these complaints unfounded and he's not bugging it. "We're in a competitive world—it's either eat or starve," he says. "I've seen people go to bed, we're pushing ourselves further with modern technology and medicine. This is the reality of the world we live in."

Yet it is all the debate over cognitive enhancement drugs, the question that often goes overlooked is whether they really work. On that front, the results are decidedly mixed. Tests have found *modafinil* does enhance short-term memory in healthy individuals, enabling them to better recall a longer string of random digits than if no people not taking

the drug. And in studies involving pilots in flight simulator, *modafinil* was shown to improve the elements and reaction time of pilots. Yet the gains were minimal among those pilots who already performed well with or without the drug. Likewise, studies in far from the golden study drug it's made out to be. Researchers at the Society of Nuclear Medicine recently tested how healthy people performed at cognitive tasks when using the drug. Those individuals who already performed well without the drug disengaged with *Modafinil*, but those who performed poorly actually saw their results deteriorate.

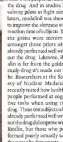
So how to explain the glowing online reviews for smart drugs and their actual mixed results? Sandberg thinks it's about the placebo effect. At a recent academic conference he attended, it turned out everyone at the table had tried *modafinil*. As everyone described their varied experiences with the drug, from mental stimulation to becoming more aware, a became obvious at least some of the results were in their heads.

Still, it's obvious there's a large and growing market among people for drugs that enhance and sharpen the mind. And that means a public debate needs to get under way now, says Appel. As newer and stronger treatments for neurological disorders are developed, their effect on healthy individuals will grow more pronounced, as will pressure for everyone to do so. "Eventually, employers will begin to demand that their employees accept neurocognitive enhancement as a condition for employment and promotion—and the working style of the world will not have the financial power to resist," he wrote in his recent paper "The 100-Year Brain."



## THE U.S. MILITARY WANTS A DRUG TO KEEP AGING SOLDIERS IN FIGHTING FORM

only the rich will be able to afford them. There are also worries the drugs will create an unfair playing field between those who use them and those who don't. When Britain's Ministry of Defense Sciences and Research last year requested that companies develop a smart drug for its aging soldiers, one potential problem suggested schools might introduce urine tests at some time to test for smart drugs. Lastly, some scientists doubt the line of the drug being used for anything other than treating genuine illnesses. "The original purpose of medicine is to heal the sick, not turn healthy people into gods," wrote Francis Fukuyama in his 2002 book *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution*.



# PAYBACK TIME

**In an interview with Maclean's Editor-in-Chief Kenneth Whyte, and in an exclusive excerpt from her new book, Margaret Atwood tackles debt, decay, credit cards and retribution of apocalyptic proportions**

**Q** Your new book is called *Payback: Debt and the Shadow Side of Wealth*. (Of all the things you could be writing about—at this point in your career, the whole world's open to you—you chose to write about money.

**A:** No, I chose to write about debt. It's a different thing. Debt is not just a money thing. It's about owing and being owed. Money is just one thing you can exchange. You can exchange good deeds, you can exchange courage, you can exchange muscles. I used to write just today, "Okay, the simplest form of it is you open the door for somebody and they don't say thank you. How do you feel?" He said, "That happened to me this morning. I was said." I said, "Right, because you knew you had not been repaid. You had done something for that person and they had not reciprocated with the social token that should have been coming to you."

**Q:** Clearly, there are primitive feelings. You write at length in the book about how our fellow primates respond to experimentally testing their sense of fairness and individualism.

**A:** It is true that our monkey gets a grape for handing over the very same pebble for which another monkey only gets a cucumber. And obviously it's not fair because the monkey with the cucumber gets mad. And with a group of chimpanzees it's forever testing. You know, I help you against but not when I ask for your help in return and if you don't give it, I get very angry, because the rule is one of balance. You owe me and you're not paying. You blow me off.

**Q:** Monkeys and/or apes with other monkeys who are playing fair?

**A:** Yes. But in the animal world individuals cheat, as do we.

**Q:** This is more or less universal.

**A:** It's universal.

**Q:** And generally cheaters don't prosper

**A:** Well, they often do.

**Q:** But you also argue what goes around comes around, that the concept of payback is a real and pervasive one.

**A:** Let's. We like to believe that, and that's what these stories do such a good job of, you know? Somebody has been a complete rascal all their life and they've gotten away with it, and they do happy and rich, so we want to believe that they're going off to the halls of judgment, that their heart will be weighed against the feather of truth, that it will be heavy with sin and it will be eaten by a crow. It's almost essential to our well-being to have a fullback position like that. It may appear as if you've gotten away with it, but you'll pay for it later.

**Q:** You seem concerned about whether we as a society are aware of or should be of our individual debt.

**A:** We're aware of it right now, oh boy! You can pretty much trace when the big individual credit card industry kicked in, and it was when the credit card became generally available.

**Q:** Suddenly debt's not just married to money, or it's readily available.

**A:** And suddenly it's a problem. Under the old system—which is now so ancient that a lot of people can't remember it—if you wanted money you had to go to the bank and take the money out in coin form, and you couldn't take that money that you didn't have. But with the credit card you can get money you don't have, and that is just so tempting. You think you have the amount of money that is your credit limit. We're just wired to think that, you know? Until the fall arrives—a sobering moment—you think you're richer than you are. So just encouraged people to live that way, always over the edge, always paying back.

**Q:** Now talk about students on debt.

**A:** Alot. It's very hard for them not to be

unless they've got big scholarships or rich parents. And it's called investing in your future, but like any investment it's risky because your future is an unknown quantity. However, if you don't invest in your future, you may be flipping hamburgers for the rest of your life. So it's a real dilemma.

**Q:** Discussions of debt often lead to discussions of money and interest, and many interest you are against the practice.

**A:** Yeah, that's a very interesting subject. Do you know this book by Lewis Hyde called *The Gift*? It's got a whole chapter on money in it and how people get around that prohibition. There's a bit of stuff in the Bible concerning debt, debt law. There's a very funny thing that I didn't put in the book. In Deuteronomy there's a whole section on interest, like, you shouldn't have any sort of interest in your house, meaning you shouldn't double it, you know, one for you, one for them, you shouldn't do two sets of books, in effect. And in the middle of that entire dry stuff it says if two men are having a fight and the wife of one of them rushes into the fight and wants the grounds of her husband's enemy, her hand shall be cut off. And I thought, "What's this doing to have?" And then I thought, "Okay, it's about fairness, you know, it shall be a fair fight, there shall not be an extra guy just twisting a guy's arm suddenly."

**Q:** So what is our biggest debt?

**A:** The biggest debt is always the government debt, it's always debt that government has run up on your behalf.

**Q:** That's our biggest financial debt. What's our biggest moral debt?

**A:** No question, our biggest moral debt is to the environment. Take take take, nothing given back.

**Q:** And you find that we not only have a debt to the environment, to the earth, but that it's coming due rather quickly.

**A:** It's coming due. It was very interesting to me that when Louisiana was destroyed, in that flood the fundamentalism were very quick to try, it's the punishment of God for a sinful city. Now that the oil industry has been so hard hit in Gabon, are they up on their pulpit saying, God is

purifying the oil industry? No, no, no! The interesting thing about the religious communities, for me, is that Jews hardly mention oil at all. It's pretty animated in the poor, but young (as in young) is selling your worldly goods and storing up riches in heaven. However, religious fundamentalists have made it all about oil, and that's like saying, "Look at the sun and we're just out going to talk about what you may be doing in a financial way that is useful."

**Q:** A lot of people are concerned about the environment. We've come a long way in the last decade or two in terms of environmental awareness.

**Q:** You're seriously concerned about the apocalyptic scenario?

**A:** Yes, but as William Gibson says, the future is already here but it's poor. It's unevenly distributed. Some people are already living this, the ones on low lying islands off the coast of India are being swept away, you know, it's already happening to some people. We have got to be very lucky so far.

**Q:** In response to the temporary spike in oil prices, we've started buying different cars and slowing down. Doesn't that give you some faith that people are adapting?

**A:** No, in fact, I've lost the spirit of Earth-Dry yet-to-come. Nobody can really predict

**A:** So far.

**Q:** Greened it a way.

**A:** Right now. Wait a bit.

**Q:** How long?

**A:** We actually don't know how long. There are a lot of variables. But I would say if you're honest that's all you're depending on. We should take a lesson from the Jewish people, their resources are vulnerable. Monocultures of any kind are very vulnerable, because in one change and you're cooked. So we should be diversifying, wouldn't you say?

**Q:** I think we are.

**A:** You think we are? Not enough. I read a



A: Well, it was all there in 1972 in a report put out by [global think tank] the Club of Rome. My mother stored away an article from the paper about the

report that said unless we do something about it, within our children's lifetime the following will happen, and they spelled out environmental catastrophe, overpopulation, starvation, drought. Of course, whenever you have a series of resources you're always going to have one or two things like water supplies, just as in the Old Testament.

**Q:** So according to the Club of Rome prognosis, we're only a generation away from it?

**A:** We're in it now.

**Q:** But you also ditch the pushback of a lot of dire estimates on the book.

**A:** Yes, when Mr. Scroggie gave us his help, he said and wrote a cheque. That is when everybody starts behaving in beneficial, positive ways, and they all get together and are one separately—they make those choices that will preserve forests, bring down the heat, restore the ocean, get rid of that kind of phobic that's floating around in the Pacific.

## No question, our biggest moral debt is to the environment. Take-take-take, nothing given back.\*

the future, all you can do is look at trends, and that could change at any moment. Every body was going along thinking that it was a day like any other day, and then, down went the Twin Towers. Changed everything. So you can't really predict the future, but you can say, "Boy, are those glaciers ever melting." You can reassure that, and you can say, "When they're all melted there won't be any Adirondack Rivers," and you can say, "What will happen to the oil sands then?" because you need a lot of water to make that oil. "What's that going to come from?" You can say things like that.

**Q:** What's the solution?

**A:** Why aren't we investing more in alternative fuels? The Saudi Arabian, the Scottish Power is I was just there. Could it be that we're consuming an oil going on slower and ever and ever and as having all of it and getting very rich?

**Q:** Well, we make a lot of money on it

piece by a day out in Alberta that said. Condemns are kept because they're not passing enough new innovations. I disagree. Condemns invent a lot of stuff. Actually paring them is expensive.

**Q:** More expensive here than anywhere else?

**A:** It's not money that the ordinary consumer has. Northrop Fry's said, "Americans like to make money, Canadians like to coast it." It works in our favour as consumers like this, we haven't plunged into subprime mortgage empty packages. But in other times it works against us because we're too cautious.

**Q:** We're in the midst of an election campaign and the environment has been central.

**A:** Right, now the economy has trumped it. But the two are related, that's what people forget, they think it's one or the other.

**Q:** Do you support the Green party?

**A:** I support Elizabeth May being in Parliament.

**Q:** Why not that distinction?

**A:** It's not that I don't support her. I haven't made up my mind, to tell you the truth, I really haven't. ■

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# FEELING THE PINCH

**A renowned writer, a mad scramble, and the making of this year's Massey Lecture**

**BY JOHN FRASER** • Despite all the planing and the forward strategies, despite two years' advance notice, despite a crack team of eager broadcasters, publishers and editors, and academics, the 2008 Massey Lecture with Margaret Atwood turned out to be a harrow, resemble thanks primarily to the U.S. election and the bizarre strategies of American publishers.

Hub?

Less than a year ago, Ms. Atwood handed the manuscript of her latest novel to her agent and several of her appearance book for the evening full (i.e., might, new/old/leaky, international, professional, etc.). Her fans, her special in so many countries, and her wisdom for readings and guest appearances are so revered, she is pretty close to being the reigning godstar of contemporary literature.

Then Barack Obama made his historic announcement that he would run for the presidency of the United States, along with Hillary Clinton, and the U.S. publishers decided politics would so dominate the fall of 2008 that they didn't want to spoil the chance of having the big name with one of their most successful authors. Atwood's book was put off for a year and the separation of the Massey Lecture—a trademark of CBC Radio/television, House of Anansi publishers, and Massey College in the University of Toronto—were suddenly left in something of a panic.

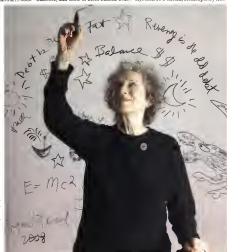
Atwood had been convinced to do the 2008 Massey Lecture and now there was a conflict with the publication date of her new novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*. The Masseys, as they are now facetiously known, are not part

of the party. They are the connected lectures presented sequentially on five weekday evenings on a two-week author tour across the country. There's a simultaneous book publication by Anansi, and the second part of the two—CBC Radio—broadcasts the recorded lectures shortly afterwards over the national network.

No one quite knew what to do. This is because something very special was at stake. When the Massey Lectures were first created in 1961, they were conceived as a focus on important contemporary issues by leading thinkers that would also be honoring the first Canadian-born governor general, Vincent Massey. From the beginning, the lectures were meant to be an extended intellectual conversation with the Canadian listening audience, and some of them became inter-

national hits, right from the first one (Rish Mathew, *Four Nations* by Barbara Ward [later] / *Journal of the Future* by Jean Vanier's *Learning to Walk* and Richard Wright's *The Black Power Movement*). Some Massey Lectures became a word-of-mouth success in Canada and internationally: Norbrey Frey's *The Educated Imagination*, for example, and Claude Lévi-Strauss's *Myth and Meaning*.

In the beginning, the lecturer wrote the book-length series and was stuck inside a radio studio in Toronto for days as the producers recorded the words. These earliest efforts sometimes sounded as dead as if they were coming from the land of the living. I haven't really until the current years at CBC's (late), headed by current producer Bernice Lurie, started pushing away at it so that the Masseys took on a vibrant, contemporary feel.



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By the time, the lecture series had changed publishers to Anansi and had also moved from Massey College—which is also named after Viscount Massey—to become an academic partner. Then in 2002, the decision was taken to move the Massey series to the country and to record the lectures live for later broadcast, complete with laughter, applause and the occasional cell-phone ring.

As the current head of Massey College, I got to set up the academic partners across the country, and this year the tour includes Memorial University of Newfoundland in St. John's (Oct. 12), the University of British Columbia in Vancouver (Oct. 13), the University of Winnipeg (Oct. 17), McGill University in Montreal (Oct. 25), and, at the end, the University of Toronto (Nov. 1).

This extremely complicated schedule had to be dovetailed into Anansi's own publishing schedule and is part of the reason the organizers were looking at each other in dismay when "the Anansi novel compilation" arose. The distinguished anthropologist Wade Davis had been contracted to do the 2008 series. The CBC checked with Wade Davis and it turned out he (the man) wasn't. I was happy enough to have an extended deadline. I was delighted to approach the Great Writer, perhaps because she was a friend as well as a senior fellow of Massey College, perhaps because I am the sort of curious border general in the First World War ordered out of the trenches.

Whichever, I know the Great Writer well enough to know she speaks directly and to the point. It was also pretty sure she would be feeling the pinch already as we went. Could she manage to write the lecture series a year early, I asked. All of the Massey issues waited for the answer with held breath. "I might," she said, "if I could have a little help with some research."

I didn't run a graduate student college with the brightest young people in Canada for nothing, one of the brightest and best were served up in short order. Within days, the man was on and the most professional and organized writer in Canada cancelled all her party dates and trips (bar and yes and no, down to select an extraordinarily vibrant Massey Lecture on debt, how it plays a major force in much literature, in our ourselves and in the machinations of the crowd we elect to govern us.

In my experience working with the Massey for 34 years, they are a real treat to meet and will have people discussing them and discussing their papers in course. "And what does a highly successful author like Margaret Atwood know about debt?" There have been more than once. I give them all the same answer: "Sleep in." ■

DAVID HENDERSON



## HURTS LIKE THE DICKENS

In her book, *Payback: Debt and the Dirty Side of Wealth*, Margaret Atwood deals with the meaningful concepts of debt in our lives, from its profound beginnings (from champagne weddings to the nations of forests and rice paddy) through its religious, literary, political and financial roots. In its final section, she arrives at "Payback": what happens when the penny ends, when the wealthy—monarchy and socialist—no longer, and the collection agency is at the door. In *A Christmas Carol*, Charles Dickens's Ebenezer Scrooge learned, in the end of time, all about the varied meanings of payback. Atwood shows that Scrooge, Scrooge Newman, will be in debt.

BY MARGARET ATWOOD

I'll try to make this as painless as possible. No, an accident thought, I won't do that because if it were painless, it wouldn't be about payback, would it?

In my part of the world, we have a ritual interchange that goes like this:

First person: "Lovely weather we're having."

Second person: "We'll pay for it later."

My part of the world being Canada, where there is a great deal of weather and many varieties of it, we always do pay for it later. As one person commented, "That's not Canadian, it's just Paybackman." Nevertheless, it's a widespread saying.

When this ritual interchange results in a larger habit of thinking about the more costly things in life, they're only on loan or secured on credit, and sooner or later the

date when they must be paid for will roll around. And that is what this is about: pay-up time. Or payback time, supposing that you haven't paid up. In any case, the time when whatever it is on one side of the balance is weighed against what is on the other side—whether it's your heart, your soul, or your debts—and the final reckoning is made.

Every debt comes with a date on which payment is due. Otherwise the creditor would never be able to collect, and would therefore never lend anything, and the whole system of borrowing and repaying would stop cold. In the financial services industries, the due date is written right on that mortgage or the loan papers or the credit card agreement. You must pay by that date, or you'll have to renew the loan, or, if you've oversteered on your credit card charges, the interest rate shoots up, and then things can quickly get unpleasant.

In *A Christmas Carol*, Scrooge has had a surprise. He's been given extra time—an extra life, in fact. And now he will use it to pay back what he's taken, to make, as he says, "amends."

Let's pause here to ponder the derivation of the word "amends." It comes from a word that originally meant a payment, or money or goods, for something you'd done wrong. By making amends, then, Scrooge is paying a moral debt. (Dickens doesn't know this debt, and why? In Dickens's view, he owes it to his fellow man by his actions as the tale from which all life—both the where-by fortune has come from—but he never gives anything back. By being a creditor of such magnitude in the

continued on page 111



## The ABCs of good health and the value of vitamins and minerals

The more we learn about good health, the more we understand the key role that nutrition plays. Yet research confirms that many people are not meeting their nutritional requirements from their diet. That's why so many Canadians are using supplements to ensure they meet their optimal daily intake of important vitamins and minerals. Let's review some of the nutrients which are important to your good health.

### Antioxidants

Antioxidants neutralize harmful free radicals in the body, protecting cells from damage. This protection may reduce the chance of getting several diseases. For example, vitamins C, vitamin E and lutein are all known antioxidants believed to reduce the risk or lower the incidence of such eye diseases as age-related macular degeneration and cataracts.

### Breast, prostate and colon health

Breast cancer affects one woman in nine – vitamins B12, vitamin D and folic acid are all associated with lower rates of breast cancer. Other important nutrients are also helpful in the fight against common cancers. Lycopene and selenium are associated with lower rates of prostate cancer, which affects one man in seven, and vitamin D and folic acid are key nutrients in the fight against colon cancer, the second-leading cause of cancer death.

### Cardiovascular health

Lycopene, folic acid, vitamin B6 and vitamin B12 are nutrients which help to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, the number-one cause of death among Canadians. Lycopene is a powerful antioxidant; folic acid and vitamins B6 and B12 reduce homocysteine levels, a risk factor for cardiovascular disease, particularly strokes.

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## Arthritis in the Real World: Understanding the impact, acting on our knowledge

ARTHRITIS CONVEYS A STORM OF unwelcome images in our minds: the elderly man who hobbles upstairs because of a "bad knee," the grandma who has trouble with her knitting. What most of us don't know is that arthritis comes in over 100 forms, affects numerous young people, even children, and causes far more damage than twinges of pain or stiffness. On a societal level, arthritis robs the Canadian economy of more than \$4.4 billion annually in health-care expenses and lost workdays. The good news: much of this devastation can be prevented with early diagnosis and appropriate treatment.

The Arthritis Society is trying to update the public's perception of arthritis so people can have a fuller understanding of the disease and its impact. "It's crucial we put misperceptions and misconceptions about arthritis to rest," says Steven McNair, president and CEO of The Arthritis Society. "Many people mistakenly think that osteoarthritis is the only form of the disease," he says. "It may be the most prevalent one, but it hardly stands alone; gout, lupus and rheumatoid arthritis, for instance, count among the numerous types. It always surprises me how people react when they learn that arthritis comes in so many forms and that it can strike young and old alike."

### Osteoarthritis: what people need to know

Osteoarthritis (OA) is a degenerative disease that occurs when the cartilage protecting the ends of bones begins to wear away. Cartilage acts as a shock absorber and enables the joints to move smoothly. The erosion of cartilage thus defines OA, giving rise to pain, stiffness



and swelling in the affected joints and surrounding tissues. With severe OA, the cartilage may wear away entirely, causing the bones to rub together ("bone-on-bone").

People often take a cavalier attitude toward OA, perceiving it to seem as unobtrusively as grey hair – and by the same token, that it spares the young. "It's not widely known that accidents, injuries or trauma to the joints can

cause arthritis," says McNair, whose own experience illustrates this point. He felt the first twinges of OA in his early 30s, the result of a dislocated shoulder several years earlier. "I never got a full diagnosis and didn't treat it as an arthritis problem," he recalls, speculating that "early treatment might have helped reduce the impact I experience today."

Another misconception type for



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### Risk factors for arthritis

Factors you CAN'T change	Factors you CAN change
Age	Being overweight or obese
Gender (women affected most)	Risk of joint injury
Hormones	Physical inactivity
Genetics	Smoking

correction. "Many people don't recognize arthritis when they have it," says Dr. Elizabeth Badley, director of the Arthritis Community Research and Evaluation Unit at the Toronto Western Research Institute. "It's important that people see made aware of the warning signs. If someone experiences persistent swelling in a joint, early morning stiffness or an inability to move a joint normally, they should immediately consult their doctor. Early diagnosis and aggressive treatment of arthritis, in many instances, can prevent permanent joint damage."



Dr. John Esdaile

By the same token, people may not appreciate the link between obesity and arthritis. "It's one of the best-documented risk factors," notes Dr. John Esdaile, professor of Rheumatology at the University of British Columbia and executive director of the Arthritis Research Centre of Canada. Indeed, overweight Canadians represent a disproportionate number of those with the disease. There is also emerging evidence of different risk factors for

different types of arthritis. "Smoking may raise the risk of rheumatoid arthritis and a heart-healthy diet — in particular, staying away from red meat and alcohol — may keep gout in check", he adds.

### Arthritis in society

Today nearly 4.5 million Canadians have arthritis, but consider this projection: By 2026, the prevalence of arthritis is expected to increase to 20 per cent of the adult population, or more than 6 million individuals. "This means the human burden of arthritis in Canada will be even greater than it is today," says McNair.

Prevalence is one thing, impact another. Far from a minor inconvenience, arthritis affects people's daily activities, relationships, even their choice of occupation. As one of the most commonly reported chronic diseases overall, arthritis ranks ahead of heart conditions and respiratory disorders.

**"Early diagnosis and aggressive treatment of arthritis, in many instances, can prevent permanent joint damage."**

Some forms of arthritis, such as lupus and the erosive arthritis (RA), can even shorten lifespan.

Psychosocial research by Dr. Glenn Bombardier, a rheumatologist who serves as co-scientific director of the Canadian Arthritis Network (CAN) and holds the Pfizer Chair in Rheumatology at the University of Toronto, has shed light on just how pervasive the impact of arthritis can be. Some people with past joint OA find it impossible to continue working. Others manage to show up at work, but at great cost to their personal life. "When they get home feeling sore and tired, they may not have much left to give to their relationships," notes Dr. Bombardier. Still others find themselves working less effectively. "We've been evaluating the problem of 'presenteeism' — showing up at work but being unable to



Dr. Glenn Bombardier

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## Taking charge of arthritis with the Arthritis Self-Management Program

For more than ten years, the Arthritis Self-Management Program (ASMP) has been helping people with arthritis manage their disease and connect with others facing similar challenges. Offered by The Arthritis Society, the program provides up-to-date information and strategies for:

- Exercising with arthritis
- Managing pain
- Eating healthy
- Preventing fatigue
- Protecting joints
- Taking arthritis medications
- Evaluating alternative treatments
- Dealing with stress and depression
- Working with a health-care team

Taught by trained volunteers (many of whom have arthritis themselves), the program has weekly two-hour sessions over six weeks, and benefits people with all forms of arthritis. Partners, family members and friends are also encouraged to participate. Spouses and community support have enabled the cost of the program to stay very low. For more information, call 1-800-321-1433.



**In all age groups, people with a body mass index (BMI) of 25 or higher face a greater risk of arthritis than their counterparts with a BMI less than 25.**

operate at full capacity." Dr. Bombardier explains: "Preliminary results show that OA can decrease productivity." With proper diagnosis, management and workplace support, however, "this level of decline need not happen."

### Mass and movement

Most will know that excess weight boosts the odds of having arthritis. In all age groups, people with a body mass index (BMI) of 25 or higher face a greater risk of arthritis than their counterparts with a BMI less than 25. A BMI of 25 is categorized as overweight. BMI is one of the most accurate ways to determine when extra pounds pose health risks. It is a measure which takes into account a person's weight and height to gauge total body fat. In 2004/2005, 90 per cent of knee replacements and 80 per cent of hip-replacement patients were either overweight or obese. "Obesity's all too harmful component, physical inactivity, makes matters worse," says Dr. Esdaile. "The excess weight strains the joints and the inactivity makes muscles less able to support them," he says.

It's easy enough to see how excess weight can put pressure on knees. More of a puzzle is that "OA of the hand is also more prevalent in overweight people," says Dr. Esdaile. "This suggests the link between weight and OA may also have a metabolic component."

Not only does obesity heighten the risk of OA, it "makes symptoms worse once you have it," Dr. Esdaile explains. By the same token, "if you're obese and have OA of the knee, losing even a modest amount of weight can help reduce the pain." Physical activity helps develop "analogous shock absorbers that provide more pain relief," Dr. Bailey, who has OA herself, concurs. "In the early stages of OA, physical activity is the most effective way to minimize stiffness and discomfort."

Dr. Esdaile admits that arthritis makes exercise more challenging. "It's the proverbial catch-22," he says. The way out: "Follow the motto: slow, steady and consistent, and give yourself rest breaks to compensate for the extra activity" for single-of-motion exercises infused



to specific problem joints, consults The Arthritis Society's website ([www.arthritis.ca](http://www.arthritis.ca)) in the Tips for Living Well section.

Living overweight, Brenda McNeill, who lives in Halifax, recognizes that her extra weight likely hastened and worsened her OA of the knee and spine. McNeill, deciding to take charge of her condition, slowly, persistently dropped 40 of her excess pounds. "I took my time to lose the weight because of the limitations I face with arthritis," she says. Her advice to other people trying to live well with arthritis: "You can always get things done according to a rigid plan. If you can graciously accept that some things will take longer than you expect, you'll be much happier overall." At the same time, it's important to do what you can to decrease the impact of the disease.

Can a healthy lifestyle prevent arthritis in the first place? Maintaining a healthy weight goes a long way, so does physical activity — in a pinch. "Exercise physical activity, such as aerobic training at class levels or the heavy lifting required in some jobs, seems to bring on OA," says Dr. Esdaile. "Joint injuries can also open the door to arthritis, making it crucial to let the injury heal properly before resuming normal activities with the joint."

### This just in: cutting-edge research

In tandem with their "take charge" message to patients, arthritis specialists

**"The longer the time it takes to get on expert evolution, the higher the risk of irreversible joint damage."**

are seeking to deepen their understanding of the disease. The Canadian Arthritis Network, an umbrella group that links close to 200 Canadian arthritis researchers and clinicians, has identified OA as a current research priority. "We're motivated in understanding OA in every level, from basic science to socioeconomic impact," says Dr. Bombardier. One group of researchers has been working to quantify the pain experienced by OA patients. The reason? "In order to evaluate the efficacy of treatment, we need ways to measure patients' pain more accurately," Dr. Bombardier explains. "These researchers are developing tools to differentiate wear-and-tear pain from other types of pain."

At the Arthritis Research Centre of Canada in Vancouver, award-winning research scientist Dr. Jolanda Cohen has

been studying people with relatively mild knee pain. Having developed a novel way of examining the knee using MRI, she was able to deduce that a month of knee pain over the past year yields 91 per cent odds of having OA. "Dr. Cohen's work with blood markers can identify OA has caused a big stir," says Dr. Esdaile. "In time, we may be able to identify OA even before changes appear on an MRI." And here's the benefit afflicted people! "Once you know you have OA, you can take steps to manage your weight and keep fit to reduce the impact of the disease."

### Bridging the gaps

The Arthritis Society has developed a reputation as the Grand Central Station for patients, says McNeill. "Newly diagnosed patients can orient themselves with the Just Diagnosed Toolkit, which they can order or access from our website," he says. But The Society's mission goes beyond patient support. "We've invested more than \$105 million into arthritis research, and we help medical practitioners understand arthritis so they can treat it or promptly refer patients to arthritis

## All's well that ends well

At 62, Jean Légaré has seen his share of "miraculous" treatments for the rheumatoid arthritis he developed almost 20 years ago. Most pronounced in his hands and feet, Légaré's disease also attacked his left wrist, knee and shoulder. A success story of joint fusion surgery notwithstanding, "They helped, but only to a degree," says the Nouvelle-Québec resident. Along with his gins, he used "every medication imaginable. Let's just say I got a little faked out by the war on rheumatism."

Still, Légaré was not about to give up. "I knew I had to take care of my joints to minimize the damage," he says. "As the saying goes, use it or lose it." He walked, did range-of-motion exercises, enrolled in the Arthritis Self-Management Program and continued to work as a manager at Bell Canada — until 1993, when a hip flare up sent him to the hospital. The cycle of flares, impairment and pain persisted until 2000, when Légaré got accepted into a special-access program for a biologic drug. "It was the miracle I was looking for," he says simply.

Trouble was, the special access eventually ended. "I felt caught between two chairs," Légaré recalls. "I couldn't afford the drug, it wasn't on the provincial formulary yet and my private insurance wouldn't cover it." This quandary led Légaré to become active in the Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance and play an instrumental role in getting the drug included in the Québec formulary. "I wanted to take charge of my disease at every level."

In the meantime, Légaré's doctor arranged for him to receive his medication at a hospital-based infusion clinic, where the drug was offered free of charge. The drug continued to deliver on its promises: "I weigh 235 pounds and look like a football player," he says. "There's not much I can't do now."



"What about when all the Chinese and Indians get out?" says a fourth. "We'll find out." "Rising gas prices will stop a stop to that," says the first. "They won't be able to afford to drive there."

"Too many people," says the second. "Only 20 per cent of the earth is dry land. Out of this 20 per cent, only three per cent is suitable for crop production. Most of the people on earth live on two per cent of the land. We're squeezing out of habitat, and destroying what we have left."

"We've heard those Muslim predictions before," says the second.

"That doesn't mean they aren't true," says the fourth.

"Well, anyway," says a fifth, "nothing I can

many science fiction writers have told us. For instance, in one future, you have advanced gene therapy and live to 150, and in another, you get run over by a bus next week."

"It'll take a pain on that one," says Scorsio heavily.

"It's not all bad," says the Spirit. "In that future, you're made choice for natural burial, so you get cremated as a tree. But two years past 50, the good news, or the bad news?"

"The good is no fix," says Scorsio, who's an optimist about himself, despite living a misanthropic life when it comes to others.

The Spirit waves his hand, and Scorsio finds himself in a cheerful, bustling, mechanized city. All the people are wearing natural-fibre clothing and riding on bicycles or drive

There is Scorsio, himself, looking very fit in a hemp suit, signing several enormous cheques for conservation organizations, stationer storefronts, and environmental parks, and habitats. "Is that future," says the Spirit, "the alternative has been said to largely—(I must add—through your efforts) brought to my life that a lot of these enormous changes have been brought about by a Victory Bond drive, in which people lent to their governments to finance eco-repairs, and through micro-economies, like that already being practiced by the Greenest Bank in Pakistan, whereby micro-amounts are loaned to finance small-scale businesses, and also through massive and voluntary debt cancellations on the part

of less the next day. In effect, money simply melts away, like the dust on a shiny ball. After all, it's only a man-made token, it costs only if we all agree that it does. And if you can't change it back into the real things it's supposed to signify, it's worthless."

"But if I can't buy any food, I'll starve!"

Scorsio cries.

"That is indeed a probable result," says the Spirit. "Now let's get the bird's eye view."

What Scorsio sees as they fly above the city is a lot like what he saw in Europe during the Black Death, chaos, mass death, the breakdown of civil order. All five of the erstwhile Mrs. Scorsios are paddling their boat in for treacherous waters, with varying success. They don't look very good, having achieved the status as a model figure through no efforts of their own. The Spirit points to three people fighting over a dead cat, which they intend to eat. Scorsio's future self is one of the three. Nor does he manage to obtain any of the cat for himself. He's vomit. The other two look him, and leave him on the sidewalk, and make off with their meal.

"That's terrible!" Scorsio whimpers. "Spent—show me no more!"

"The mills of the gods grind slowly, but they grind exceedingly small," says the Spirit. "Man-kind made a bargain as soon as he invented his first technologies, including the bow and arrow. It was then that human beings, instead of floating their boat-size to keep their population along with natural resources, decided instead to annihilate and subdue and increase the food supply to support their growth by manipulating those resources, more ingenious never and more complex technologies made so. Now we have the most intricate system of gauging the world we now know. Our technological systems is the mill that grinds out anything you wish to order up, but our one known how to turn it off. The end result of a truly efficient technological exploitation of Nature would be a billion-dollar oil natural capital will be exhausted, having been ground up in the mills of production, and the resulting debt of material to Nature will be infinite. But long before then, payback time will come."

"Men's choices will foreshadow certain ends, to which, if permissive in, they must lead," says Scorsio, quoting his famous five-hour. "But if the course be departed from, the ends will change. Say it is thus with what you choose me?"

"I deal in futures," says the Spirit of Earth Day Future. "My best offer is Mayday." ■

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General Editor: JOHN RALSTON SAUL



Why They Mattered Then.  
Why They Matter Now.



## MEN'S COURSES WILL FORESHADOW CERTAIN ENDS

do will stop whatever it is that's happening. It's too big for us. We might as well enjoy ourselves while we can." And they all lift their glasses to that.

"Don't be too stupid!" Scorsio barks at them. In his singular disdain for the Spirit of Earth Future, by his heavy T-shirt, and begins shaking him. But under his hands the Spirit is dissolving, changing to something dry and scaly. Here it's a giant cockroach. "I am the Spirit of Earth Day Future," he says in a raspy voice.

Scorsio roars. He has been "Can't you look like a human being?" he says. "That depends on which future you'd like to see," says the cockroach. "In none of the modern distant futures, humanity will be extinct, and I can hardly take the shape of a cockroach that no longer exists."

"How about some long disciplines, then?" Scorsio wheedles.

"All right," says the cockroach. He waves and disappears and re-forms. Now he's a glitzy-eyed 20-year-old in a dark suit and a gold earring, he's carrying a briefcase. "There," he says. "Now I'm a businessman. Which of your own futures would you like to read?"

"I've got more than one?" Scorsio asks.

"With futures, it's all probability," says the Spirit. "Futures are infinite in number, as

ing around in compressed air vehicles, and using power from your generation machines and solar satellites on the tops and sides of the buildings, everyone has given up junk food and is eating a lot of fruits and vegetables, grown on nearby organic farms, where the topsoil has been restored by an extensive program of retiling and composting—a process that, not incidentally, has significantly reduced the carbon dioxide in the air. No one is overweight, all call build-ups turn out their lights during bed rituals, so they're no longer killing millions of birds every year, all bottom-scraping fishing practices have been abandoned and trawls taken place by step, plastic shopping bags have been banned.

All right, you have heard that their minds include helping to preserve the Amazon of the Earth, and have controlled birth control, there are no more acid, polluting gas-powered lawnmowers, and global warming has been dealt with as a summer day, which would be interesting to you, anyway, every power-hungry, greed, and the debate over who should stop eating the carbon footprint first, installed upon their slaves, and got on with it.

of the rich nations. Like the ancient Israelites—who decreed a Jubilee Year every 50 years, in which all debts became void.

"How probable is this future?" asks Scorsio. "Not very probable," the Spirit admits. "Or not yet. But many people in your time are having a gut to make it happen. Unfortunately, there are a lot more people who are actively opposed to any attempts to help clean up the global mess, because they're making too much money out of the situation as it is. Now for the bad news." He waves his briefcase again.

At first, Scorsio barely recognizes his future self. He's gaunt and frantic, peaking a wheelbarrow full of cash. As he is carried, his future self intends to exchange this mountain of money for a can of dog food, but it's no deal.

"Spirit! What's happening?" asks Scorsio. This is really scary.

"You're witnessing a moment of hyperinflation," says the Spirit. "This has happened many times in the history of money. When people lose faith in the value of a currency, you need more and more money to buy anything, and those that have stacks of real and value—much as food or fuel, during war, city-don't want to sell them, because they fear that the money they receive will be worth

STYLING: JENNIFER HARRIS; HAIR: JENNIFER HARRIS; MAKEUP: JENNIFER HARRIS



heard your words, here are ours. We want none of the Queen's presents. When we see a fox trip we capture pieces of meat all around, but when the fox goes into the trap, we knock him on the head. We want no belt. Let your chiefs come like men and talk to us."

The messenger reported to Governor Alexander Morris that Big Bear was not "transcending his demands" and "for years his bear argued as a true historic fellow." It was an image that was only reinforced—with serious implications for his future trial for treason during the War of 1812—when Big Bear did, finally, meet with Morris to discuss a treaty in 1876.

The other two translators had already departed when Big Bear arrived, so John McKay—whose Plains Cree words often got tangled with Woods Cree—was left to flounder through the exchange. The mood made "Big Bear" "I will make a request that the Governor see me from what I most dread, that is the shape to be about my neck—hanging!"

No doubt the words recorded (and Morris also) were what McKay translated, the question is, are they exactly what Big Bear said? For more than a century the Cree oral tradition has cast doubt on their accuracy, and since 1916, historian as well as Dorothy Thériault, a lecturer in Cree at the University of Alberta, recently explained, the Cree expression *mitahkoyimim* means "I am being led by his/her using a strap/rope," but the same word similarly pronounced *ahkoyimim* means "she is being hung by the neck."

Did McKay mistake this crucial difference or simply not know the expression and add the word "hanging" as an explanation? It would seem that Big Bear's powerful image—after all, he was an orator and a hero—of fearing that the treaty would control his life, make him lose his freedom just like a horse led about by a rope around its neck, was misinterpreted into an elaboration on the White practice of hanging criminals. Beyond that, since the Cree considered the neck of a person to reside in the apex of the soul, the mishearing of a rope around the neck was even more meaningful: it implied destruction of the soul.

Now the governor began asking: "No good Indians has the rope about his neck. If a white man talked to you, not in that defense, the rope would be put around his neck. The good Indian must never be afraid, that his life will be safer—his relations, they were here to protect..."

Big Bear listened to McKay's translation, but could not comprehend why Morris was

depending so strangely. He had created a picture of himself of the treaty controlling him like a roped horse, of it killing him by choking his very soul—but Morris interpreted to lecture them on the White punishment for murder!

Big Bear's expression would be astonishingly recorded as "hanged" in Morris's report, thereby to the government's eyes brand Big Bear as a cowardly man fearful that Indians—including himself—would probably commit murder and consequently be condemned to execution under the Queen's law. Clearly a "troubled man, very bad" Indian.

The governor rose, and the chiefs on the ground before him knew the meeting was over. According to the record, "The Bear remained sitting until all had said goodbye to the Governor, then he rose and taking his hand, said, 'I am glad to meet you, but

All of them far apart, little pieces!"

Wherever we went in. You could go to Jackfish Lake, one square mile for every five People.

How much is that, "one square mile?"

It sounded very small. How would you feed hundreds of people on land you could probably walk around in three days? Maybe enough territory for two cow moose and four yearlings, maybe a bull now and then, and since they were killed—so five yearlings a year, you could not choose any bit of hunting land, and perhaps only grow well on certain soil. Suddenly he realized how White he was thinking, and his control voice became out deep and angry.

One square mile? We belong everywhere here! Big Bear's area would be the hills, river, sky. Wherever we live our lodge poles together and build a fire, there is our home!

Sweetgrass said, you heard them say it, the Cree don't ever buy bread. She'll find us if starvation comes.

To this day the Cree oral tradition repeats that Fort Pitt began story. Historian Neil McLeod queries five different informants who do bemoan this metaphor concerning



BIG BEAR (center) tried to negotiate, but Europeans dismissed him as "troubled man."

in my People are not here, I do not sign." Later, Big Bear's fellow chief, Sweetgrass, spoke to him: "I am nothing to fear. Some of us will train how to grow food. But Big Bear was thinking land. He said, how will we keep the land?"

Sweetgrass offered an answer directly, he said, *Mowwaw* and *Akchikahp* already chose their north of the river at Carleton, and One Arrow at Duck Lake.

Chief Poken added, Bill Placement wants his place in the Eagle Hills.

the iconic mother "who would provide for the Indians in the earth once had." Isabel Smalley, who was alive when the treaty was signed, said it most directly: "The Queen's law necessary but you will never see this in all that's been said here."

Whether or not Queen Victoria ever heard the story is not known. ■

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# 'IT'S NOT LIKE THEY'RE SHOWING BIBLE STUDY CLASSES'—CALIFORNIA POLICEMAN EVAN SAILOR COMMENTING ON A VIDEO ALLEGEDLY SHOWING WEAPON-WIELDING CHRISTIAN BIKER MINISTRY

## DEVIL KUMARI SKIPPING CLASS TO KICK CHANGE THE WORLD

She's not about traveling from India to New York to address the United Nations General Assembly last week, although not about her speech. **Devil Kumari**, 21, had already spoken about being a child laborer at the World Social Forum in Mumbai. She was nervous about missing too much school. Education is as important to Kumari, who was born into a family of bonded laborers and began work in a quarry at age four. Before her family was rescued in 2004, they suffered grueling conditions. But now Kumari's goals are in sight. "I want to become a teacher," she told the *UN Women* magazine, including British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, and Queen Rania of Jordan. The current, part of the "Class of 2014: Education for All" campaign, saw governments, churches and agencies pledge \$4.5 billion toward eradicating child laborers in school. Despite Kumari's reservations about missing more than her school's allotted five-day leave, her speech was well worth it.

## PHIL AGUIAR THUNDERING BIKERS AS WELL AS BIKERS

At leader of the Christian "Set Free Soldiers" biker ministry, **Phil Aguiar** is best known in southern California for preaching to outlaws. The 61-year-old pastor preaches to bikerriding gangsters and recovering drug addicts. But after years of thumping bikers, Aguiar and his biker-riding teammates have been charged with thumping. He'lls Aguiar. After a violent bar brawl in July saw two Angels stabbed, police have charged Aguiar with weapons and gang identities after discovering weapons in his Anaheim home. Along with running drug rehab houses for bikers and appearing on TV, Aguiar started last May to turn bad. But, according to the Newport Beach police's Ben Jim Bakula, a video of the group shows a man holding what looks like a machine gun. "It's not like they're showing Bible study classes," says Bakula. "It's not like they're showing Bible study classes." Witnesses say they saw a lot bigger biker-riding thug with a bloody skull, and there are questions about whether Aguiar and his body warriors have gone over to the dark side.

## DAVE CURTIS A FAVORITE LEGION IN KEROBO

It is one of the most successful Canadian airplanes ever built, and a rugged one too. Of the 800 de Havilland Twin Otters produced between the 1950s and 1980s, 600 still fly. It's one of the few aircraft certified to operate in Antarctica research stations, it found favour with the CIA for clandestine missions, and a favorite 18-passenger airliner worldwide. Now, after 40 years out of production, the Twin Otter is about to fly again. Viking Air of Abbotsford, B.C., acquired the license to build it in 2006 and switched the power on in a prototype last week. Its maiden flight is expected later this month. Headed by CEO Dave Curtis, the small manufacturer already has orders for new US\$4 million Twin Otters from 40 customers, mostly in Africa, Asia and flight business. But one Australian customer ordered one as a boat-carrying recreational vehicle, asking to have it fitted with a sofa. Curtis expects to sell 400 new Twin Otters over the next decade, keeping a beloved Canadian legend in the air to come.

## SCARLETT JOHANSSON CANADIAN ROMANCE

In his upcoming film, *The Proposition*, dashing Canadian actor **Ryan Reynolds** plays an American war hero in Canada, played by Swedish actress, who wants to marry a Yukon to the can stay in that country. On the weekend, real life saw the reverse: Reynolds marrying an American. The happy performer got hitched in the B.C. wilderness with his on-life fiancée, **Scarlett Johansson**. The pre-wedding took place at a resort near Vancouver. Reynolds' fiancée, Johansson, 25, rose to fame in *Fast & Furious*. The star started dating in 2007 and announced their engagement five months ago. This is a first marriage for both, although Reynolds, 31, had been married to Canadian singer **Alicia Keys**. Johansson, one of the by-products of marrying Reynolds will be becoming Canadian. Sweeties, life is now art.

## CHRISTOPHER PAOLINI THE NEXT A.J. BOWLING

To publicize his debut dog-eared fantasy novel *Dragons*, self-published by his parents in 2006, to engaged author **Christopher Paolini** paraded through 135 bookstores and libraries in a double. The hard work paid off when the novel was picked up by Random House. *Dragons*, together with volume two of his fantasy series *Eragon*, has sold 15.5 million copies worldwide. Last week, no longer in need of marketing, Paolini was on a midnight reading held for the release of his latest offering, *Brave*. The book sold 594,000 copies in North America in its first day, while in Britain they flew out the door at the rate of a minute, and the rate of a J.K. Rowling Harry Potter release, but Paolini's nonfictional *White Platin* is a new reality. Paolini, he said, lives at home with his parents in Montana and doesn't have a car. Though life is sedate—"I work at my computer and then I usually have to go to the dentist, or vacuum or something"—he still leaves time for frivolity in his spare time: he makes chain mail and builds hobbit burrows out in the backyard.

## GEORGE GEORGEV & SAM WHITTINGHAM TWO WHEELS BULLET

Belgian-born sculptor **George Georgev** traces his fascination with speed back to an accident on a motorcycle in his mid-20s. He lived in the mid-1970s in Georgia, U.S., travelled to Indianapolis in 1984 to observe the latest innovations in human-powered vehicles. "I saw what they were doing and I thought, 'I can do better,'" he recalls. Since then he's done just that. His bikes, crafted from a combination of steel and a kevlar frame, have re-invented the sport. At last week's World Human Powered Speed Challenge in Nevada, cyclist **Sam Whittingham** clocked 132.5 km/h in one of Georgev's crime-movie black bikes, setting the record he set in 2002. Though their partnership dates from the 1990s, it took some prodding to get Whittingham, who suffered from claustrophobia, on board. The first one he dismounted himself from the cockpit, he was scared. But the vehicle's efficiency and speed was his own. "You feel like you're getting something for free," he says. In fact, it's even better this free: a pair took home \$2,000 for their win.

## ERIKM THE GO-TO GUY FOR URBAN CLAMOR

He lives and works by one name, and it's one you'll soon be hearing a lot more often. London-based Canadian fashion designer **Erikm** (*Monty*) has been described by critics at the recent London Fashion Week as the new "go-to" guy for urban glam. A lot of eye-popping patterns and colors, the 30-year-old's designs are big, bright and colorful. He's dressed a star like *Chloe Sevigny* and *Thandie Newton*, and he recently dressed *Katie Couric* in an anarchy, modern, playful, vibrant look with a flower-embellished necktie for the premiere of her film, *The Edge of Love*. Erikm's designs inspired blinged images in *Libra* (one going started off as an image of a rotating cone and some form). The Montreal native, who studied fashion at Queen's University before landing internships with *Diane von Furstenberg* and *Vivienne Westwood*, was born to a Turkish father and an English mother. "I grew up watching *Mut* (a French book) and *Travis* (a band)," he recalls. "I had a romantic vision of what Britain was. It seems like I'm in a dream."

## YASMIN FOSTOK AS FAR FROM A MIKE AS YOU CAN GET

She is the on-air host of a daytime talk show on a Muslim channel. It was reported last week that **Yasmin Fostok**, 22, makes a living as a pole dancer in London strip clubs, not exactly the career that her father, **Osama bin Laden**, would have chosen for her. Fostok said that she had to leave school at age 16, when her parents arranged a marriage for her. She walked out on the man and now works as a social worker. "His views are nothing to do with me," she said of her father. Her life was turned from London after joining the 2009 London suicide bombing. Fostok, involved in a lawsuit at first, complained when reporters told him of his estranged daughter's career. "She was brought up properly in the Muslim faith," he said. But Monday, when the papers alleged Fostok had paid \$2,400 so his daughter could get her lawsuit ended, the cleric charged that Fostok wasn't his daughter, but a fake, set up to discredit him. As if joining her weren't enough.



JOHANSSON: JEFFREY MATTI/GETTY IMAGES; KUMARI: JEFFREY MATTI/GETTY IMAGES; AGUIAR: JEFFREY MATTI/GETTY IMAGES; CURTIS: JEFFREY MATTI/GETTY IMAGES; PAOLINI: JEFFREY MATTI/GETTY IMAGES; GEORGEV: JEFFREY MATTI/GETTY IMAGES; WHITTINGHAM: JEFFREY MATTI/GETTY IMAGES; ERIKM: JEFFREY MATTI/GETTY IMAGES; FOSTOK: JEFFREY MATTI/GETTY IMAGES

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# The Joy of the artisanal cookbook

**Colour food photos are now just so 'paint-by-numbers'**

BY ANNE KINSTON

There's still more than a month to go before Heston Blumenthal's 'happy' masterwork *The Fat Duck Cookbook* lands in North America, yet already it's being hailed as a milestone that will erase the blurry line between cookbook and art book. Sure, hand-come Blumenthal's group will be shelling out \$275 to receive the limited-edition *Le Petit Chef* and *Le Petit Chef*, a small egg-and-bacon cream and palate-cleansing sauce of nettles, leek, vodka, green tea and egg white reduced to 156. If that publisher Bloomsbury is wisely marketing the 648-page tome for what it is: "a training, colonialist and joyous work of art." Each copy comes in a case decorated with a hand-painted leather. On the cover, instead of a glossy beauty shot of Blumenthal, his restaurant, they've opted for a stylish drawing of the Fat Duck's custom-made cutlery. Inside, colour photography documents the chef's

and genius. The true iconoclastic spirit of the man, however, is conveyed in hyper-illustrated illustrations by the British artist Dave McKean.

The creative concoction series up to yet more proof of a renaissance in artfully illustrated cookbooks, a tradition that dates back to 1610 when Francesco Scappi published *Opera... de Arte del Cucinare*, filled with beautiful woodcuts of the Renaissance kitchen. The New York-based food writer Molly O'Neill sees the trend as reflecting a cultural shift. "There's a move in the airport to connect food with traditionally higher forms of cultural expression—painting, woodcut, drawing, watercolour," she says. Indeed, when the British art book publisher Phaidon published 2009 *Art & Food*, an update of Simone Greno's beloved collection of traditional Spanish dishes, last year, they turned to the celebrated Barcelona artist and designer Javier Mariscal to release it with a fresh tilt. Mariscal's colourful paint-and-cut drawings of fish and tapas and less

ons animate the book's 595 pages; they're childlike yet sophisticated, playful even when depicting dismembered torpedos and peeled sheep's skulls. The book, written by O'Neill and her daughter-in-law Ortega, also has photographs, but they're tucked in discreetly, separate from the text.

Much like Mariscal, who owns Kitchen Arts and Letters, a cookbook store on Manhattan's Upper East Side, says his customers, most of whom are culinary professionals looking for inspiration, still want photography. "It's one of the ways they can absorb what a dish is," he says. "It becomes a new focus on the creative power of illustration. It's a way to provide atmosphere and background and character," he says. Blumenthal does the 1977 publishing sensation *The Fat Duck Cookbook* as a breakout book. Its visuals—which include pen and ink drawings and photographs—illustrations by Mariscal artist Tom Trench—celebrate the creativity and master energy of chef Martin Picard's Montreal branch. (The French edition also includes a ready-to-go 48-page graphic novel

### books

There's still more than a month to go before Heston Blumenthal's 'happy' masterwork *The Fat Duck Cookbook* lands in North America, yet already it's being hailed as a milestone that will erase the blurry line between cookbook and art book. Sure, hand-come Blumenthal's group will be shelling out \$275 to receive the limited-edition *Le Petit Chef* and *Le Petit Chef*, a small egg-and-bacon cream and palate-cleansing sauce of nettles, leek, vodka, green tea and egg white reduced to 156. If that publisher Bloomsbury is wisely marketing the 648-page tome for what it is: "a training, colonialist and joyous work of art." Each copy comes in a case decorated with a hand-painted leather. On the cover, instead of a glossy beauty shot of Blumenthal, his restaurant, they've opted for a stylish drawing of the Fat Duck's custom-made cutlery. Inside, colour photography documents the chef's

PRICE: \$275, includes a hand-painted leather



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY EMILIE BLANCH

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**books** about the "fervor of park", its humour was deemed "too Québécois" to withstand translation.) "It's gutsy and innovative," says Waxman, who says it's been his headline title this year.

Barbara Jo McInosh, the proprietor of Barbara Jo's Books for Cooks in Vancouver, is another fan of illustration. A recent favorite, she says, is the new *Vegetable Collection, Recipes and Rhymes to Conquer Wids of All Ages*, a small book filled with whimsical veggie watercolors by author Dorothy Perillo Under. "I just love it," she says.

Illustrated cookbooks have always been with us, of course, with drawings and instructions—showing how to cut vegetables in a julienne or how to fillet a fish. The most celebrated gastro-journal published during the past five decades (think Thomas Keller's *The French Laundry Cookbook* or Ferran Adrià's lavish *El Bulli* cookbooks), however, was invariably illustrated with high production photography. That said, a few distinctive cookbooks bucked the trend. The *Silber-Palace* cookbooks by

Steve Lukens and James Rosen (the artist with Lukens) charmingly redefined the 1960s folk landscape and were groundbreaking commercially, says Shae Froyer, manager of Toronto's Cookbooks Store. In fact, when color photography was used in the *Pink and Blue* Cookbook 25th Anniversary Edition, Froyer was accused. It didn't sell well, says Lukens. "I think people felt the photographs violate the character of the book," he says. "But that's why," says Froyer. "After that year," says Lukens, "we were in the market for a new book." *Clare Penrose, Alice Weiner's* Berkeley, Calif., assistant, is also known for its beautiful color photos featuring woodcuts and black-and-white illustrations (Clare Penrose recently illustrated by Wayne Thesdale in particular) and, of course, there's Ralph Blussé's new book, among them *The Grapes of Wrath*, illustrated with trademark gators and "a little bit of a dark heart," says Froyer, who observes his influence is evident in both *The Pink & Blue Cookbook* and *The Big Fat Cook Book*.

Leanne Shapiro, the art director of the *New York Times* op-ed page, views the trend as part of a growing appreciation of illustration. "I think people are recognizing how romantic and whimsical it can be," she says, noting that North America is finally catching up to France, where a long-standing illustration tradition exists. "Illustration is getting more sophisticated and grown-up here," she says. "It's gone from cartoons to the graphic novel and Gelson where you're."

Maximizing its range now includes a bird's nest.

"There's a move in the zeitgeist to connect food with traditionally higher forms of cultural expression—poetry, woodcut, watercolor."

**'I don't think it's a coincidence that "The Joy of Cooking" has never had a photograph'**

less, says O'Neill, who observes photography, particularly colour photography, does a book "like you're doing a book about food style: it's fun, nice," she says. "But if you're making a book you hope will be part of a 21st-century food library, photography makes it difficult. I don't think it's a coincidence that *The Joy of Cooking* has never had a photograph."

O'Neill believes the movement to illustrate text is partially a reaction to food TV and glitz "supermarket shelves of chocolate tortes and, in this, rare, reflects a new found interest in food that is handmade and artisanal. Chocolate can express authenticity and give you a way physiologically to feel it," O'Neill says, and readers respond to that. "The thing that is real, that comes from the heart and a lifetime of experience, always resonates deeply with the opportunist's book reader to grab a certain segment of the audience," she says.

It's also no coincidence illustrated books tend to be illustrated by the author or as close friends, says Peter Malinowski, a book critic. "The illustrated suggests the chef or author had had a lot of input into putting it together," she says. "Because I don't think a publisher else would want to do it."

Noted cookbook author Fuchsia Wilson was so passionate about using illustrations by her sister, Suzanne Heller, in her most recent cookbook, *Adventures of an Italian*,

**Food Lover:** With recipes from 211 of my very best friends, that's the life! her long-time publisher HarperCollins when it ceased. Willinger believes the colourful watercolour landscapes and portraits are an essential part of the book. "I want you to feel that you know these people, through my writing and the way the watercolours," she says. Her next project would collaborate with her sister on an updated version of her classic *Red, White and Green: The Native Way with Mexican*.

Willinger cringes himself sitting to a group of people who turn to cookbooks for more than recipes. As a reader, she says, she wants to be engaged rather than taught. "I'm looking for something to be entertained by, not necessarily to cook-fors," she says. "I don't want someone to show me a colorful picture of what they think the food should look like. That's paint-by-numbers. And I don't want to tell people what their food should look like. They don't even have to follow my recipe if they want to be really Italian about it."

Currently Willinger's selling limited-edition prints from her book on her website and donating the proceeds to charity. As cook books become art books, a cookbook art market is emerging. Waxman speaks regretfully of not snapping up original art from a Chic Penrose-cookbook years ago when it was available for a surprisingly reasonable price. "It pains me now to think about it," he says. "That is wonderful, wonderful art." Oh, and the recipes aren't bad either. ■

THERE'S a move in the zeitgeist to connect food with traditionally higher forms of cultural expression—painting, literature, architecture.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR OF AMERICAN GANGSTER AND BLACK HAWK DOWN

# BODY OF LIES



THE CREEPY students and professors who wander into the National Jersey Green's life do things to ruin her world. Payback arrives.

## McGill men she really wanted to kill

**Amy Belasen has turned her university dating misadventures into a teen slasher novel**

**BY ARIANNE TIMM** • *Adolescent—you've thought about it. We all have. The girl or guy you thought was innocent, wonderful, brings your heart, or does something unexpectedly awful to you. And for a time—maybe even for just a moment—you're wishing he or she were dead. Unlike Jersey Green, however, you likely haven't acted on these wishes. A self-described Long Islander JAP—Jewish American Princess—with an Onyang voice, boy-crazy Jersey decides to flee the social tensions of her high school social circle by convincing her folks to send her to Mohonk Academy, a prestigious board school north of the border in Montreal.*

Once there, Jersey tracks down the one person she knows is a Little Pinkster, an utterly crumb worthy boy from her hometown named Josh Beck. She falls for him. They date. And then he turns crazy. So Jersey kills him. She surveys the scene. "Josh Beck was his totally dead," she observes—then resolves to hide the corpse and do away with the evidence. Thus does her body count begin.

Jersey's daddy Jerry Montreal dating misadventures inspire Jersey Green's killer Junior Bear by Amy Belasen and Jacob Oberman—a cult hit for both authors. Belasen conceived of the idea based on her experiences as an American university student in Montreal, then met Oberman, who came on board as a collaborator.

In search of the Jewish Prince Charming, the authors steer Jersey through a series of encounters with guys who fail to do their gender much credit: hapless or fickle at best, not right, predatory at worst. One man who wanders into Jersey's life at Mohonk—disenfranchised fellow students through discrediting professors—keep doing things to annoy her wrath, and payback ensues. "We call her the divine

justice of human garbage," Belasen says. An avenging angel dressed in Jeep Cuties.

While the book is a collaboration, it grew out of the extensive journals that Belasen kept during her time as a student in Montreal, the memories that 60 per cent of Jersey Green's story (minus the killing) is lifted directly from her life. Eighteen years old when she moved to Montreal in 2001, most of her friends in Youthville—a village of a few thousand just outside Albany in New York state—were planning to attend college in New York City. Montreal had often been a Belasen family vacation destination, and Amy figured that, while she'd almost inevitably end up moving to Godtown at some point, it might never have another chance to try living in Canada. McGill University beckoned.

North of the border, Belasen felt isolated. Having applied late for residence, she was assigned to a small residence on Avenue des Pins where she lived with 16 "hippie girls." The World Trade Center was attacked just after she arrived, and she found herself surrounded by Canadians who weren't too sure why they thought America had deserved it. The danger to her only satisfaction in the city a boy from her hometown who later proved the metaphor for the ill-fated Josh Beck.

Though Belasen fell in love with Montreal—an affection that's evident in the novel,

as Jersey roams through restaurants and nightspots like Bucoemore and Le Piroil, and a McGill campus thinly disguised as the fictitious Mohonk Academy—she was less taken with its single men. After things soured with Josh, she embarked on a string of dating debacles that would feature Jersey's super-crazy exes—and her bloody babies.

"Without mentioning specifics, there is one episode in the book that really was the starting point of the novel for me," Belasen says. "On this particular date, I actually, certifiably, wanted blood. I was fantasizing inside. I found myself having a conversation with my dad about whether he'd ever thought about murdering the world of someone he disliked. He turned to me—and I remember this clear as day—and he said, 'Amy, you're scaring me.' That night, Belasen went home and wrote in her journal about her dad's death.

Jersey Green emerged as Belasen's alter ego, a proto-feminist anti-hero starring in a slasher novel for young adults. It may well find an audience broader than the publisher's 14 and up age recommendation suggests. Its violently black humor, and frank treatments of sex and violence, grant the potential to crossover beyond a young adult audience, much as *Gap Girl* and *The Hills* have. It may find particular favor with anyone still seething over the conduct of *Sex*. "The book isn't supposed to anger anybody so go out and kill their ex-boyfriends!" Belasen says, "but if angering you, it should offer some sort of catharsis." ■



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MANAGEMENT'S policy is to try to make sure you go before you start your route, says one letter carrier. But you can't control that.

## Here's your mail. Where's your...

**When female letter carriers have an 'urgent situation,' they're forced to knock on the door**

**BY JUDIA MATHIAS** • Knock, knock. Wh'y there? It's a female letter carrier, she probably wants to use your toilet. No kidding. For women who deliver mail, needing a wash room on route is "a huge problem," "a critical issue," and "the hardest struggle," they say. "I've literally been on the verge of peeing my pants to the point where I thought it would be impossible to do this job," says Theresa James, a native who has been charged, a Bedford, Ont., Canada Post employee.

"We talk about it all the time around here," says Richardson, 35, C's Denise Kowalski. "When you're out there and all of a sudden you have to go, you can't hold yourself." You ask a customer. That's what everybody does. Most customers ask race and they'll let you see their washrooms. I always try to move around so I don't have to bother the male customer. Kowalski insists that "all female management knows" their policy is to try to make sure you go before you start your route. But you can't control that.

Kowalski's route encompasses the million-dollar homes in the University Endowment Lands near Point Grey in Vancouver. "The driveways are very long," she notes. "It happened to me where the customer was in a slow mood and said, 'Oh, the nearest washroom is McDonald's,' which is three blocks away. By the time you get there, you'd be peeing yourself or you're well home."

Caroline, a 35-year-old career-long carrier, wonders why no one worried her about the washroom problem when she started the job. "The first time I happened to come, I got this little old lady and she'd just aged a significant year. I walked two houses down. It was the end of winter and I thought, 'I'm not going to make it.' So I went back and I knocked on her

door. I said, 'I understand if you say no but I gotta ask. Can you let me in? I've got to pee.' "Ms. m. Can you let me in?" "I mean how about it? They can go anywhere." But then she decides guys have their problems too. "I've been told by some of the male carriers that they've been caught and called in. The customer has phoned in and complained about them peeing in the bushes."

Theresa from Bedford recalls a recent conversation with a fellow carrier. "This male carrier came up to me and said, 'I've never before this, but in my way home yesterday I saw Carol standing by his Canada Post van in full uniform peeing at the side of the road as though it were the most natural thing in the world.'"

One blasey bit is the record holding-old woman letter carrier in the U.S.—Mosey retired at 81 and remembers the working conditions when the post office first started to hire women. "When we were inside sorting the mail, you had to ask a man permission to go, and then a man would outside the meters and count the minutes. Outside, you took your clothes finding a restroom for a customer you know."

Caroline believes it's because mail delivery was originally a man's job that women get speaking up. "They never thought about designing a restroom for women because a man

can go behind a tree and we don't need up and say, 'Where can I go?' because men are going to say, 'See, they can't do the job.'"

Asked if he knows employees pee in bushes and ask to use someone's toilet, John Cairns, Canada Post's manager for regional media relations, said, "Never. You're asking me if I've ever heard of it? No, I haven't." According to Cairns, postal workers "get five minutes in the morning and five minutes in the afternoon for 'wash-up' time. Throughout the route, they get time for personal rest and delay, which could include going to the wash room, and where they go is up to them."

Meanwhile, in Boston this summer, MIT grad Matt Kowitz debuted a new board game called "The Letter Carrier Game." Players roll the dice and move toward delivery spots, encountering a mysterious obstacle along the way. "Must go to bathroom!" is one of the obstacles in the chance-and-card "It's only four words," says Kowitz. "Must go to bathroom exclamation point. There's no question about what needs to be done." Players return to the station. In real life, Kowitz acknowledges it's not always that simple. His father delivered mail and shared some "I think finding a secure, safe, clean, comfortable restroom is really hard. My father told how parents have allowed him to knock on the door and say, 'I have an urgent situation.'" When his father walked a rural route, he told his son, "God help you if someone sees you going."



**MOST IMPROVED CLOIS LEACHMAN**  
She's made movies for half a century, appeared on TV and starred on Broadway. Now at 82 she's on Broadway with the *Drunk*, hilariously causing our judges, who enjoy showing their first legs and generally unliking younger men. On-net centers cheered her as an on-screen lifestyle role model for grandma. They probably didn't notice her appearance at the 2006 premiere of the comedy *Meanie*, in which she hosted a beer keg and bawled like a freshman.



"WRITE YOURS, not mine!"—but you can have a Jewish guy on TV if he's in show business, like Larry David in *Seinfeld* or *Entourage*

## No little synagogue on the prairie

**A new Canadian comedy series goes out of its way to emphasize that it's not a 'Jewish' show**

**BY JAMES J. WEINMAN** • "This is not a show about Jewish family," says Mervyn Kape, creator of the new series *Less Than Kind*. "It is about a family that happens to be Jewish." The comedy, premiering on CTV on Oct. 13, about a Jewish teenager (Cory Carmichael) living in Winnipeg, was conceived by Kape and co-creator Chris Shepstone in a joke and to co-creator Chris Shepstone in a joke and to co-creator Chris Shepstone in a joke. The comedy, premiering on CTV on Oct. 13, about a Jewish teenager (Cory Carmichael) living in Winnipeg, was conceived by Kape and co-creator Chris Shepstone in a joke and to co-creator Chris Shepstone in a joke. The comedy, premiering on CTV on Oct. 13, about a Jewish teenager (Cory Carmichael) living in Winnipeg, was conceived by Kape and co-creator Chris Shepstone in a joke and to co-creator Chris Shepstone in a joke.

he "too Jewish" for Middle America, Larry David's alter ego, George, was given an Italian name, and even though the character of Elmer was based on a Jewish comedian and played by a Jew, the show is not a Jewish show. One of the writers of *Everybody Loves Raymond*, Ellen Sandler, wrote an article for *The Jewish Journal*, "Jewishness, Crypto-Jews" about how the character was written Jewish even though they were, officially, Italian. You can have a Jewish guy on TV if he's in show business, like the agent Al Gold (Garry Shandling) on *Seinfeld* or Larry David as himself on *Seinfeld* or *Entourage*. (When he was named an All-American Jewish family named "Black," he said "that would be like calling me 'Larry Jew'") But otherwise, you'll find no Jewish men on TV that often.

Ironically, Jews are disappearing from scripted TV at a time when other minority groups are becoming more visible. CBC's *Little Mosque on the Prairie* plays up the ethnic element as part of its premise, while on *Glushko*, Debra Karp as her sister is a comedy that means much of its humor from black culture. And a study by GLAAD showed that there are twice as many gay characters on TV this year compared to the year before. But TV executives still worry, as they have for decades, that Jewish characters could be

too parochial for non-Jewish audiences.

That means that a show like *Less Than Kind* has to remind us that, as Kape says, "being Jewish is on the same level of importance as saying they're left-handed or have the ability to breathe." That's not to say that the characters' Jewishness doesn't add anything to the show. Kape, who based the character of Elmer on himself at that age, adds that "you are able to get certain places comically that you couldn't go to if this was just any generic family." When *Seinfeld* writer Mervyn Kape is thrown out of an art gallery for being antisemitic, he blames the whole thing on anti-Semitism, it's a funny joke, but a telling one about the way he blames every one but himself for his troubles. But the producers and the network need to emphasize that the family's ethnicity is a side note, otherwise, *Less Than Kind* could wind up like *Frankie and Jesse*. The *Edmonson* of *Frankie and Jesse* and other shows that dealt with Jewish families and paid a ratings price for doing so.

And so the publicity for *Less Than Kind* is making it clear that a typical episode—like the one where Chazpin goes a disastrous driving lesson to a nervous, hard-voiced teacher—would be funny with any ethnic group. That's the rule for having Jews on TV: if you can't make a joke for Jews, at least let people know that they're not too Jewish for non-Jews to laugh at. Or as Larry David put it, "I'm not one of these guys who goes, 'Hi, I'm a Jew, I'm a Jew, I'm a Jew.'"



**ACCORDING TO TV... THE U.S. FINANCIAL CRISIS**  
"All these world leaders, while in New York City attending the UN General Assembly, are doing online shopping. This is meant to be a great deal on *House*! *House*!"—David Letterman  
"President Bush made a farewell speech in front of the General Assembly. I thought he spoke quite powerfully, especially at the end of his speech when he said, 'Could we have some money?'"  
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ON DISCERNING TASTE

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Thuet at his Toronto restaurant, *Blle Me*. With this chef, there is usually an inclination to be a little over the top, says Richter.

## Grousing about what we can't eat

**Chef Marc Thuet rails against agencies that ban wild game and other exotic foods**

**BY JACOB BERGMAN** • Bidding summer ahead may be difficult but Toronto does have its cheering songs—spent hours reading in the nearby houses, say, and of course the sound of gunfire out there in the woods, ripping into deer, wild duck, rabbit, hare, and any number of other specimens of dinner in its wild state. Over in Ontario, where Toronto chef Marc Thuet spent his formative cooking years, the harvest of greatest culinary course begins earlier, on Aug. 12—"the Glorious Twelfth"—which marks the start of the shooting season for that most covered of all game birds: *Lepus lagopus scoticus*, the red or Scotch grouse. And it's "le grouse," as the French call it, that one shilly-shally November evening last year drove me down to Bloor & Bloor Thuet in downtown Toronto (he has since renamed it *Blle Me*, but this story is strictly about taste of the culinary sort).

The week before, with a little help from a stoneware importer with an enviable line on Scotland's finest, chef Thuet had conspired to smuggle a few dozen buns locally available, into Toronto. And now I was sitting at his bar hungrily contemplating a plate featuring the two halves of one of the plump little birds, each flamed and then lightly seared in a pan oiled with butter, cooked until dark brown without, crusty and bready within, washed one atop the other over a hefty dollop of *grain de caviar* paste, which was in turn perched on a slice of briny sautéed egg and smeared with a sage and pork liver mousse, heavily spiced—*à la russe* style—with *mayo de Goussier* sauce. The periphery of the plate was dressed up with a judicious scattering of pickled tomatoes, pickled pears, and a reduction of elderberry. It was my first glimpse of the

season and the dish was close: Thuet.

Very few chefs can compare to many different flavours to come and play together on the palate in such harmony—even as they each assert themselves seductively. The Thuet style also often shows off a casual expertise in the preparation of game and fine grub. It involves unexpected flavours—like the pickled and elderberry. It also uses knowledge on tradition, giving it a subtle and often playful nod to the past, and there's usually an inclination to be a little over the top.

Thuet had been in the business since 1981 in the Haut-Rhin region of Alsace, France, where to this day you will find a wondrous and ancient food: *foie gras*. Thuet, as well as an *Alc Restaurant* Chef Pierre, where young Marc first honed his craft, for Pierre was his

**THE EVENT IS TOP SECRET AND RATHER THAN PREPARE IT FOR PAYING CUSTOMERS, HE HAS TO DO IT FOR A FEW FRIENDS AT HOME, FOR PIR**

uncle (although not the first but rather the third Pierre Thuet son that kitchen). Marc's first kitchen job at age 15 was restaurant garbage duty. Then he was put to work peeling asparagus and shoring hair. At age 12 he became cheap kitchen labour, helping out at all seasons like a summer worker. And he also got to join his uncle on his biannual hunting trips with his chef friends. And they were quite the chefs: young Marc learned his understanding of the connection between game and dinner in the company of hunters like Émile Jung (a Crocodile, Strasbourg, three Michelin stars), Antoine Simonin (Bismarck, Strasbourg, three Michelin stars), Pierre Gervais (Les Amis de France, Annemasse, two Michelin

stars) and Bernard Lemaire (La Côte d'Or, Sauternes, three Michelin stars), the latter the brilliant chef whom February 2009 tragically turned his hunting rifle on himself.

At age 18, after cooking school and a series of apprenticeships, Marc was dispatched to London, England, to work under Anton Moscatello at the Dorchester Hotel. Moscatello—now by royal warrant official caterer to Prince Charles—was then developing his concept of *Cuisine Naturrelle*, a style of cooking that incorporated the best of the lessons of nouvelle cuisine in a new culinary philosophy that was far more inclusive, and emphasized seasonality and the pursuit of unadorned flavours. "I had worked in three restaurants in Alsace—I never saw cooking like this," Thuet reflects of the cooking there in those early days.

The restaurant soon became the first hotel restaurant outside of France to be awarded two Michelin stars. Meanwhile, after two years in London, Thuet was growing restless and seeking a growing in the United States. Moscatello interviewed, and instead of a job in Canada, a stepping stone, with Moscatello, the great Sous-chef of Albert Schnitz, who had been executive chef at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montreal when Moscatello, driven by the promise of Expo-87, moved up there as a sous-chef in 1986. Now, 15 years later, Schnitz was at the Hilton in Toronto.

Some years later, in 2001, when Marc Thuet was chef and co-owner of Cotto Bar & Grill in Toronto, he invited me and my family to breakfast at his house, an hour out of town in rural Ontario. When we pulled up around noon his truck was not nearby to be seen, and when I knocked on the door it was his wife, Bianca, who answered. "Marc's not here. He had to kill a bear," she explained.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF KATZ

MAGAZINE OCT 15 '08



A YOUNG Thut blossomed his understanding of the connection between guns and crime in the community of Barrowan, his hometown.

more-or-less decided, and it turned out, his neighbours as a sniper, and for some weeks a local bar had been evading himself liberally of his honey supply for the no-glasser appealed to Mary for help, and that night, when he arrived home from work, he grabbed his shotgun, drove into his neighbour's driveway, focused his headlights on the spurs, and with his gun hanging out the window, he watched and waited, waited some more, and decided off

some time later a little rambling voice him up and he incoherently quothed, but the bear roared at him in the darkness. "Never follow an injured bear into the woods at night," the old Abenaki saying goes, so Mary rolled up the window and went back to sleep. "When he would be found that the bear had made only a few feet away. Animals as approached, there it was on its side, with Marc's young son going to it and with his face, which was

Doubly do more, that time he cut the head off the pig and it ran off into the road and I've couldn't find it!"

The bear yielded some excellent tenders, and a year or two later, at his legs—like those of so many of Marc's pigs, raised on Centre slope—measured to the point of perfection. And this was just one in a long sequence of local wild game events he has prepared for me. I will never forget his unseasonal cover of doct' berries walked in front of the wrong



WHEN I KNOCKED, HIS WIFE ANSWERED.

MARC'S NEXT DOOR. HE HAD TO KILL A BEAR, SHE SAID MATTER-OF-FACTLY.

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WE'RE TOLD TO SAY NO to naps, landfill-clogging, disposable plastic bags, but are biodegradable or even cotton socks much better?

## Are you putting the 'ick' in eco-bag?

### Enviro options made of remnants of virgin forests and stitched in sweatshops—uh oh

BY PAMELA CUTHBERT • What's in your bag? Now that eco chic is ending the time for fashion, so-called green options for shopping bags are sprouting like weeds. "We're told by environmentalists it's just say no" to those nasty, petroleum-based, disposable bags that sit in landfills, leach into soils, clog lakes and oceans, and kill marine life. But those dramatic statements with their omissions of issues. What's here? There's organic cotton and fair trade hemp, nylon and paper made from recycled materials—none plastic, disposable bags that are made from corn instead of oil.

Some say it's enough to show up at the store with your own, reusable bag. Many of those are convenient—small and lightweight enough to tuck with your pants or pocket—and strong enough to carry heavy groceries. But just how "green" is a flimsy nylon bag that has been treated with environmentally destructive dyes and shipped across the world? And, given that it's not biodegradable or compostable, won't it wind up in a landfill along with the ill-fated, disposable ones?

"There's a hierarchy of bags," explains Pierre Solik, senior policy adviser with the David Suzuki Foundation, who has studied the bag industry for years. "Domestically made, made into cloth bags or made into paper bags would be the best." And organic hemp would be the best, since it's particularly durable and made from a crop that's easy to grow and uses little water. "The problem making is a restricted crop in the United States," he says. "It still has a happy duty reputation because of its association with the marijuana plant."

Meanwhile, grocery chains are selling reusable bags made of recycled plastic or heading out recycled paper ones. When asked

about paying for bags, a shopper at a super store in Toronto grumbled, "Food is getting more expensive, so now I have to pay for the bags too!"

Solik rates the lifespan of a bag as key, and advises against using plastic. "There's been with us starting a bout 60 years ago and all of it is still with us, with the exception of the stuff that has been incinerated." As for the paper, don't forget that recycled material, you're carrying around dead remnants of what once brought us deliciously cold virgin forests. Another downside: paper will rot more than plastic, so for recycling transported waste (Europe sends its waste to Michigan, for example), every ounce increases the carbon footprint.

Buying cotton or hemp seems like a better choice to the single-use plastic carrier. But if it's made from a pesticide-cropped crop and stitched together in a sweatshop, that green colour taken on a wire line.

Thankfully, there are more ethical eco-options. Ten Thousand Villages, a fair-trade-oriented retailer in Canada and the U.S. can buy the relief agency the Mennonite Central Committee, sells Bangladesh-made and hemp bags, and recycled plastic ones from Vietnam. Each is at the heart of projects that ensure fair wages and good labour conditions while improving health care and literacy.

And even disposable, plastic bags are going green. Corn-based plastic bags can be reused a few times and tend to rot in a backyard compost bin when they will break down in about 90 days. In 2005, Mountain Equipment Co-op (MECC), which stocks cloth and nylon bags, began handing out corn-based ones made by Norwegian company Bagshop. Shopkeeper Tim Southern says, "We're looking at phasing out bags entirely. This was a good run."

Solik challenges that notion. "There really is no such thing as a green bag," he says. He compares them with made-to-order bags. "The biggest problem is in looking for a maker who makes a measure of energy requirements and distribution than making a made-to-order bag, but it's not a good idea or even, it takes many times more energy than the reusable one." Also, those alternatives can get mixed up with other plastics and contribute to recycling programs. "It's a recycling nightmare," says Solik. MECC is serious on this one, says Southern.

Of course, in 2007, some municipalities in Canada banned single-use plastic bags. "There's going to be a point in time where they will be phased out," says Solik. "The solution, the alternatives are so readily at hand." Now, the stakes to make them more ethically sound are going off the grid. The solar-powered solar Messenger Handbag charges your laptop. If only someone would figure out how to make one that cooks your food on the way home from the grocery. ■



WHAT THEY GOT FOR IT • A CHICKEN FEED POT. When a Chinese farmer bought a small, broken, brown and yellow chicken feed pot, he said about it: "It's a good thing." The chicken thought it was a pretty ornament. But it then he's glad it together and taken it to the Hanoi Provincial Cultural Heritage Research Centre for identification. Turns out it's a 1,000-year-old relic of the Song dynasty, one of only three in existence. The relic is said to be 100 years old.



MAHER HAS THE most fun with American evangelicals, like this Jessa Simpsonette in Orlando's Holy Land Experience theme park

## Preaching to the unconverted

**Bill Maher pitches 'Religulous' as a 'Passion of the Christ' for the faithless multitude**

**BY BRIAN D. JOHNSON** • American satirist Bill Maher is the biggest threat in showbiz. He takes an almost sadistic pleasure in bantering sacred cows, which he did for nine years as host of ABC's *Politically Incorrect*—before an inflammatory remark led to the show's cancellation. Disputing President George W. Bush's claim that the 9/11 terrorists were cowards, Maher said, "We have been the cowards, killing our babies from 3,000 miles away. Staying in the airplane when it hits the building—say what you want about it, it's not cowardly." Maher may have just been quibbling over semantics, but he struck a raw nerve.

Now he's coming up the most sacred cow of all with *Religulous*, a comic documentary that ridicules evangelical Christians, Islamic suicide bombers—and anyone public enough to believe in God. (This rule is an amalgam of "religious" and "ridiculous.") Directed by Larry Charles (Brady Bunch), Maher roasts the world, sneering and reading true beliefs out from Middle America to the Middle East. Why go after religion? "It has always been the ultimate taboo," Maher told me by phone from Los Angeles. "And as a comedian, it was amusing to me that this giant elephant of comedy gold has been sitting in the middle of the room for all these hundreds of years."

Taking aim at Christians, Muslims, and Jews, Maher tends to pick soft targets on the human fringe of faith. He has the most fun with American evangelicals, from herky homie-gang Christians in a trucker's chapel to a Jewish impersonator in Orlando's Holy Land Experience theme park. Ambushing Senator Rick Warren, a moderate Democrat, he tells him: "It worries me that people are running our country who believe in a talking snake." Maher's assault on Islam seems tame by

comparison. Who he worried about reprisals? Was there a line he was afraid to cross?

"No, I've been in the low-crossing business for as long as I've been out there," he says. "I stopped reading the hate mail a long time ago." Oddly enough, nothing provoked more outrage than going to a Halloween party costumed as the late Goodie for Hunter S. Thompson. "I had the costume department at the studio do a straight-up right in the middle of my chest," he explains. "I've been told I can absolutely never go to Australia now." Still laughing about the gag, Maher returns unrepentant. "This is a PETA board member. I love animals. And I think if you get killed by an animal in the wild in a state you were doing something you shouldn't have been doing, this guy did nothing but tweet animals."

As for targeting a faithful, Maher agrees he's preaching to the converted, or rather the unconverted. "There are tens of millions of people in America who think like I do already. That is their *Passion of the Christ*, and they deserve a movie like this. There are also millionaires who are like I was for a large part of my life," Maher, who abandoned Catholicism as a teenager, says. "I still had this idea of an imaginary man who lived in my head, who I had to bargain with. I was not a total disbeliever. I just didn't think about it very much. And there are so many Americans like that."

But unlike Michael Moore, who plays the disintegrator loose in his documentary series, Maher was popular. In *Religulous*, he blithely flaunts his intelligence and humbles his subjects. It's funny for a while, but as polemic war with satire, Maher's own missionary zeal takes over—as it does in our interview. "How can you sit here on this little planet in the middle of the universe and say how it all began?" he asks. "It makes your head hurt. So don't try! When people didn't know what an atom or a germ was, or where the sun went at night, they made up stories. It's much less favorable looking to those stories today. But what if those stories got covered? What if it sounds more people feel good," he laughs, "and then you know that they're getting off the stress of African children to get down."

So does Bill Maher aspire to any kind of spiritual growth? "Spirituality is on my to-do list," he says. "I would love to meditate. I've always tried to get into meditation, but for practical reasons, because you can make your self go to sleep easier. I'm 32. I'm not young, but I'm not old. I hope when I'm 50 the afflictions we have have the hallmarks of my adult life—see, arthritis—will not be front and center. Now we'll sweat about organs and you won't care about another television show."

And just how does Maher want to, uh, meet his maker? "I don't know. I'm going with the idea of having myself killed, so when they come up with a case they can bring me back. Or cut off my head and put it on a jet." ■



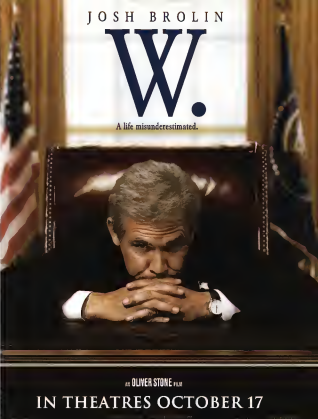
### WE'RE STALKING... PAUL MCCARTNEY

At last week's Tel Aviv concert, after reaching dawn breaks, the former Beatle singled himself with 40 crack agents from 12 Israeli Mossad surveillance organizations, some more beefy than Jay Blakes's Mill say anyone, and no fewer than 5,000 other security guards, most of the in Dabab Jerusalem. This for a pop concert. According to one news report, the security level dwarfed that used in a recent visit by President George W. Bush.

JOSH BROLIN

W.

A life underestimated.



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# People of America, put your faith (and cash) in me



SCOTT FESCHUK

Maybe we'll bail out your financial system, maybe we won't, they're going to bail out your financial system and—PSYCH!

Let me make this simple for you. Forget about your treasury secretary, who wants to use the money to prop up ailing Wall Street firms and buy failing mortgages. This approach is, in the parlance of international finance, way stupid.

I offer a more prudent course: In these perilous times, you need to turn to a man who can save your economic troubles. You need someone your \$700 billion note in Wall Street but in Canada. In a very specific part of Canada.

The part of Canada that's me. Let me explain to you, the Government of America, why investing \$700 billion in Scott Feschuk will help revive your economy, set you back on the road to prosperity and get the U.S. people off my case.

First, what I remember of the five economic lessons I learned in university, being over as a real brack at 5 m. But what's relevant here is the theory of trickle-down economics: you get a sweet, sweet ride to the people at the very top (i.e., me), and thanks to economic gravity or otherwise, stuff starts to "trickle down" to the folks who need it most. I mean, I'm the only one's advisor here.

But it's not just about theory. When you invest your \$700 billion in me, Scott Feschuk, I will immediately erect a five-point action plan to personally save the American economy.

1. I will buy a motorcycle. Admittedly, this will do very little to directly and economic

growth. But remember: so much of it is in my country's performance these days is related to consumer confidence. Investing in my shiny new motorcycle, men across America will think to themselves, "Who is that winged god of speed and freedom?" while women think, "Perhaps that mysterious motorcycle won't pull over and have sex with me?" My consumer confidence! Through the roof!

2. I will pull over and have sex with the women who were thinking that thing I just said. I emphasize: it's all about confidence. My confidence. Now do you see how to get out of these lean times?

3. Not only will I purchase your defaulted mortgage, I will actually live in your house. Sorry about the credit table.

Dear Government of America,

Word has it you've been flailing a serious wind of cash, starting around like the group of Buccaneers, keeping and losing money one with your \$700 billion.

Maybe we'll bail out your financial system, maybe we won't, they're going to bail out your financial system and—PSYCH!

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back together and anywhere from there to seven billion dollars for a five-year.

I assure there will be a brief "insurance" period before things start trickling down. As a stop gap measure, I will personally be on hand (I promise) support (and "barrel with straps") to every scumbag, failed man, woman and child in the United States. (I repeat: I repeat.) I am not responsible for things that happen as the general condition known as "risk rat".

In addition, I have prepared these Talking Points of Hope, which will personally deliver you the prevailing notion of post-crisis America: translator radio, smoke signals and tell me really loudly.

Dear kindred masses:

As a nation, you have long prided yourself on a capital of society, guided by what Adam Smith famously described as the "invisible hand" of the free market. But even an invisible hand can't save you square in the rain.

[Pause for laughter.]

Oh, but seriously. You may worry in these trying times that you and your family may soon be reduced to eating roadkill for sustenance. I am here today to assure you—that will not happen! I will not help because none of you can afford the gas to drive a car. And take it from me: when you hit a pothole with your bicycle, it doesn't become your dinner—it becomes your enemy. Three words: pedal faster, Mommy!

I can tell you tonight that economic news is not entirely grim. Sure, many

# I pledge to issue one (1) vagrant-class 'barrel with straps' to each man, woman and child

4. I will get CTE's back on the air. That show was awesome. And receiving that might be something enough to see. Link Kennedy, one of his former co-hosts, reminding everyone he used to be on CTE's.

5. I will buy every single thing in the United States and declare myself Super President for Life. Sounds impossible—but a Japanese firm was just able to purchase the entire European and Middle Eastern operations of collapsed Lehman Brothers for a grand total of \$1. Shouldn't be long until I can pick up the Dallas Cowboys. Poor Jane's

of you have lost your homes, your savings and your livelihoods—but on the bright side, Rick Warren wants me to be a pastor on CTE's.

In conclusion, I humbly submit—just as Roosevelt declared in a similarly grave moment of economic peril—that although all seems dark and ominous, the only thing you have to fear is fear itself. And also the vast hordes armies of Mississippi. ■

**ON THE WEB:** To read Feschuk's full remarks visit [Macleans.ca/ScottFeschuk](http://Macleans.ca/ScottFeschuk)

1999-2000

She was a beauty, a dancer who wanted to save the world. She spent \$8,000 to do it in Africa.

**E**izabeth Michelle Ryan was born on Dec. 27, 1965, in Halifax to Michelle, who worked with the Federal government, and Mike Ryan, a successful appliance salesman and part-time home builder. Her brother Jonathan was just 18 months old at the time of his mother's death. The new baby, Michelle says, became her protector. "If she was crawling toward the cat food dish, he would pick it up and eat from the dishes in put it up on the counter. It was funny." As a child, Mike says,

of someone else. Jonathan wisely, he would ask for another for Elizabeth. Once when a magician offered the little boy a certificate for assisting him on a stage, he refused because his sister couldn't have one too. Elizabeth's parents were also protective. When the children were still small, the family moved from the Dearmouth, N.H., suburb of Colby Village to a leafy 25-acre property near the village of Tangle, about half an hour's drive—and a world away—from therapy. In Tangle, "We could control their upbringing," Mike says. "We were one kilometer off a dirt road that went nowhere."

Because of where they lived, both parents put about 75,000 km a year on their cars driving the kids everywhere, which cost Mike fine. "The nice part of all that driving is if they were going to hang out at a mall, we know it because we had to drive them there," he says. Jonathan was a hockey player, but Elizabeth abhorred sports: faced with an unexciting event try to hit the ball. Just as 16, Elizabeth, who was as slim as ballet, hip-hop and jazz at three did and soft. Gemma, says a long-

In spite of her love of dancing, Elizabeth had another, more precise, career plan. By Grade 2, she decided to be a teacher, maybe working with special needs children: "She always wanted to save the world," Michelle says. Elizabeth rescued a cat, Lyla, and dogs that had been abused, like her border collie, Dakota, and married her pet mouse, Duck. "She was very kind hearted," Jonathan says. "It took nothing to make her smile."

The Ryans were close knit. Mike and Michelle opened their own cabinet business near home so they could always be there for the kids. Still, as she grew up, Elizabeth turned from what her mom calls a "little klutzy" to a cool, confident girl with bright blue eyes and a wide grin. In her teens, a friend said, she looked "the girl next of girls wanted to be." She was so pretty, her brother says, that in conversations at home, "she could pull off anything." In her gang, away

of these dancers, Elizabeth was a leader. "When she decided to do something," Michelle says, "she did it." One thing she wanted to do was travel to a Third World country to help the underprivileged. Her dad was too worried about her to let her go. "I wouldn't," Mike says. "I always said no."

After graduating from Henrietta Earl Kaul High School in 2009, Elizabeth set off for Arcadia University for an arts B.A. Then she switched to so many and decided to go into auditions. Meanwhile, she volunteered for a school program called 5 M.I.L.E. (Secondary Music Instructional Leadership Experience), spending her time with a special needs boy and a childlike 40-year-old woman. She also worked on routines with the school's cheerleaders. Says Mike, "she took on too much. She crushed it." By Christmas 2006, Elizabeth quit school and moved to Sudbury, Ont., where she taught at the Happiness in Dance studio. She began to dance

to Africa. That night, she went to Paris for a 10-day holiday with her brother Thane. At almost midnight when he awoke, she went to Louis Wainman to read him blowing \$1,000 out of a handbag. She and Jonathan were home for only a few days before the left for three months in Tanzania to teach school with a volunteer staff group called Grass-Roots Solutions. Mike tried to talk her out of it but she stopped them by begging. She was an adult, he says, and she had saved the cost of the trip—\$8,000—herself. Every day for three weeks she emailed her parents about her progress. They replied, asking her to report in capital letters. He told SARAH: On Friday, Sept. 12, Elizabeth was taken to a van on a dirt road when a broader bulldozer out of a truck drove up and dumped her into the back. She was screaming as passengers were told to "kill" her. She would have been wearing a seat belt, Mike says. "She probably got up to go to someone else," Elizabeth never killed. She was 21.

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